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CURRENT COMMENT.

WELL, well, well!—what an echo of old times reverberates from the pages of the daily press. We never really expected that M. Poincaré would be so energetic with his neo-Napoleonism, but since he is, we think it is worth while to look back and see how long ago the measures that he is now taking were mapped out. In the winter of 1916-1917, the Governments of France, Russia and England made a secret agreement for disposing of the loot, as follows: "First, Alsace and Lorraine to be restored to France. Second, to be included in French territory all the metallurgic basin of Lorraine and all the coal-basin of the Valley of the Sarre. Third, other territories on the left bank of the Rhine which are at present part of the German Empire, to be completely separated from the latter empire and freed from all political and economic dependence on Germany. Fourth, the territories on the left bank of the Rhine not to be included in French territory, to constitute an autonomous and neutral State, and to be occupied by French troops as long as Germany shall not have complied with the conditions of the whole of the proposed peace-treaty."

THAT neat little deal was hatched up, we repeat, in the winter of 1916-1917, just before Mr. Wilson mustered his cohorts to make the world safe for democracy. Nobody knew anything about it; it was a secret arrangement, engineered between M. Isvolsky and M. Doumergue, and endorsed by the British Government. Looked at in the light of current developments, what a cheerful memory it carries of Mr. Wilson's famous speech on "peace without victory," and of his noble doctrine of "no annexations and no indemnities"! Eh, what? It must make the average American ex-conscript mighty proud of his country and its starry flag to read the day's news, parallel it with the foregoing secret agreement, and then realize that what he fought for was purely and simply this land-grabbing scheme, laid out in detail by this precious crew of buccaneers three months before the United States entered the war. Fighting for liberty, democracy, equality and the like, may have something to recommend it; but it is a little beyond us to see any great credit in fight-

ing to make it possible for the French iron- and steel-interests to steal a nice lot of coal-fields and consolidate them with the French ore-beds into a handy and workable economic unit.

If the French plan succeeds, it will be bad for the British and American export-trade in iron and steel. The French have never shown themselves first-class operators in this line of trade; nevertheless, the control of this combination of coal-beds and ore-beds would make them hard to undersell in the Continental market. The American soldier may therefore have occasion to reflect on the mild irony implied in sending an American army to enable French interests to cut off American export-trade in an important and profitable commodity. Perhaps the actual ownership of the steel-business, like the armament-making business, is so well internationalized that Judge Gary and Mr. Schwab are not worrying over the prospects; and then again, perhaps it ain't. We, however, are not interested in the fortunes of these gentlemen, but rather in those of the general public, which are bound to be affected unfavourably by any further slowing up of trade. What with the tariff and the state of exchange, customers are hard enough to find as it is; and what American business really needs more than anything else just now is customers.

To a dispassionate visitor from another planet, it would doubtless appear incredible that of the many Governments on this earth of ours only one has gone on record as protesting directly, publicly and emphatically against the French Government's ruinous adventure in the Ruhr valley. The Russian Soviet Government is commonly accused of being fanatical and impractical. Yet its statement on the invasion of the Ruhr zone, if one may judge from the somewhat fragmentary reports in our newspapers, was eminently sound and well-reasoned. In effect, the Russians declared that for other nations to stand by without action or protest while the French Government destroyed the bases of European economy, is criminal folly. This statement from Moscow stands out in sharp relief against the silence in London and Washington. From the indifferent attitude displayed in the White House and in Downing Street one would think that the ruin of production and exchange in Europe is a matter of no concern, at least as compared with the filching of a remote oil-concession for privilege. One is reminded of the attitude of that weary colonial statesman of old Rome who shrugged his shoulders and said: "Oh, well, crucify him if you will—I wash my hands of it."

If the breaking up of Germany is of no concern to the Government at Washington, it is a matter of gravest import for every American business-man and every American workman. Before the war, we exchanged more goods with Germany than with any other country except Great Britain. Over half a billion dollars was the annual measure of this trade, equivalent to one-eighth of our foreign business. Now that a hostile invader has cut off the German fuel-supply, and the German mark has fallen to a point where it is no longer a medium for international exchange, what is German trade worth to us?

UNFORTUNATELY, under our highly undemocratic political system no group of elected representatives of our people can haul Mr. Harding's Secretary of State upon the carpet and ask pertinent questions about what is happening to our German trade, and what exactly he proposes to do about it. Our British cousins labour under no such disability; and while Parliament was still in session there was considerable instructive discussion of the remarkably complacent attitude of Mr. Bonar Law's Government towards M. Poincaré's depredations. Indeed, Mr. Morel and Commander Kenworthy both requested that the Government make some definite statement concerning the truth or falsity of the reports that this indifference resulted from an informal understanding, arranged by Sir William Tyrrell in a recent hasty visit to M. Poincaré, whereby French privilege was to be permitted to take the coal of the Ruhr while Mr. Bonar Law snatched for British privilege the oil-fields of Mosul.

To such questions, under British practice, the Government must reply. An under-secretary, in Mr. Law's absence, answered somewhat inconclusively that such rumours were likely to have but a slender foundation, and that he personally knew nothing of the incident referred to; but he could not get off without the promise of a more specific explanation at some future date. In Parliament there was manifested a lively appreciation of the fact that the smashing of Germany would be a heavy blow to British business-interests, and would greatly increase unemployment; and these considerations were thoroughly aired for the public's education. It is probable that from the very nature of his position as the head of a political Government, Mr. Law will stand fast for privilege; but on an occasion of this sort, under the British system, those who voice the claims of trade and of public welfare can cause him much embarrassment.

IN order to reassure any of its readers who may be somewhat shocked at the advance of the French army into the Ruhr, the New York *Times* has hauled out the old notion that the Germans have some kind of a pre-eminence in the use of force, and are responsible for the present proficiency of the French in this line of endeavour. In support of this proposition, the *Times* draws upon an unnamed source for several statements, which it attributes to Bismarck. These statements are hot enough, in all conscience, and in the interest of historical accuracy, we should rather like to know where they were found. However, it does not much matter, for we think no better of the old Chancellor than does the editor of the *Times* himself, and we are not at all interested in refurbishing his character. Between ourselves and our esteemed contemporary, the difference consists rather in the fact that we do not so easily forget the existence of Bismarcks by other names. We do not so easily forget that the military system of Prussia originated in an attempt to check the conquests of the Kaiser Napoleon, who once so aptly said that God is always on the side of the heaviest battalions.

THE Germans learned from the French, the French learned from the Germans, and the English perhaps learned from both. At any rate, there was not much that the English did not know about the use of force when they published their official manual of "The Laws and Usages of War," in 1914. For instance, they understood that it might sometimes be necessary to resort to reprisals against a whole community for acts committed by members of the community who could not be identified (section 458). General devastation of enemy-territory was held to be, as a rule, absolutely prohibited; in fact, it

was permissible only in very exceptional cases where it was imperatively demanded by the necessities of war (section 434). Again, the inhabitants of the enemy's territory might be put to forced labour, for legitimate purposes (whatever that may mean); and refusal to work might be met with punishment (section 392). These, then, are samples of the sort of thing that the editor of the *Times* will find in the British war-book, if he will take the trouble to acquaint himself with it; and it is perhaps not inappropriate to ask that he take a cooling plunge into these pages of plain English, before he attempts to write again about German force and frightfulness.

"THERE are more separate economic areas in the world now, more numerous and far higher tariffs, than at any time in the last hundred years: there is no sign of a free-trade movement anywhere in the European world; all the evidence seems to point to the fact that the free-trade tendencies of the nineteenth century have been reversed." So says Mr. W. A. S. Hewins, Chairman of the British Empire Development Union, in a recent issue of the *Nineteenth Century and After*; and he hopes to remedy the situation by making it worse. Within the last twenty years, almost all the parts of the Empire have been linked up by preferential tariff-agreements, and in 1917-18 the Imperial Conference resolved that "the time has arrived when all possible encouragement should be given to the development of the Imperial resources, and especially to making the Empire independent of other countries in respect to food-supplies, raw materials, and essential industries."

ACCORDING to Mr. Hewins, there are special reasons why further steps should immediately be taken in pursuit of this policy; and just in order to show how international good will flowers out in the sunshine of protectionism, we call attention to the fact that one of Mr. Hewins's "special reasons," for the adoption of more trade-restrictions by the Empire is the recent adoption of additional restrictions of this sort by the Government of the United States. The Fordney-McCumber tariff is characterized by our British friend as one of those developments which threaten "the interests both of the United Kingdom and the Empire as a whole"; and as we read this and contemplate the prospect of retaliation, we picture to ourselves a great host busily engaged in sowing the wind.

GOVERNOR SMITH of New York has set an excellent example for President Harding in issuing a pardon to Mr. James Larkin, who was serving a long sentence as a political prisoner under the "criminal anarchy" law of New York State, and in intimating that the half-dozen other victims of this tsarist statute would also speedily be released. The Governor rendered his fellow-citizens a service by emphatically stating in his message the truism that public welfare and security are ill served by keeping people in prison for the mere expression of unorthodox political opinion. It seems a pity that Mr. Smith did not reach this degree of illumination earlier in life, for he sat in the Governor's chair when Mr. Larkin went to jail, in the spring of 1920; but late conversions to democratic ideas are possibly better than none at all. Perhaps in time Mr. Smith may even attain to a sufficiently high degree of consistency to demand the repeal of the abominable law which makes possible such flagrant injustice as that which Mr. Larkin and others have suffered. In contrast to Governor Smith's sane procedure is the recent remarkable action of President Harding in commuting the sentence of one of the sixty Federal political prisoners, a native of Illinois, on condition that he accept

deportation, never to return to our shores. This establishes a new precedent in political intolerance in America.

EDITORS have been bombarded of late with considerable passionate literature on the treatment of racial and religious minorities in Asia Minor, sent out by a committee of citizens including the President of Yale University, the President of Princeton University, the President of Chicago, the President-Emeritus of Harvard, and other eminent educators. The concern of these gentlemen over alleged discriminations against distant peoples betrays a worthy sentiment, and we have read their expositions and arguments with interest. We have also read with equal interest the concurrent newspaper-reports of a sanguinary racial pogrom in Florida, a lynching in Arkansas, and of the notable policy of racial discrimination adopted at Harvard University, where a large proportion of Jewish applicants are now excluded, and Negro students are barred from the privileges of the dormitories. Concerning these domestic instances of discrimination we have as yet received no protests from our humanitarian educators and their fellow-committeemen, though we should think that the anti-Semitic and the Jim Crow regulations at Harvard would particularly move their sympathies. It is usually easier to work one's feelings into a ferment over wrongs committed four thousand miles away than over similar wrongs committed in one's own country. We commend to these gentlemen the old injunction, uttered by a member of a racial minority in the Near East, about the mote and the beam.

SPEAKING of racial minorities, the committee mentioned above has petitioned President Harding to use his good offices to secure the appropriation by Congress of twenty million dollars to found an Armenian homeland in Cilicia. This seems a curious proposal, and makes one wonder just how the members of the committee expect the plan to be carried out. Cilicia was part of the Turkish territory in Asia Minor handily appropriated by the Allies at Versailles. The southern portion was placed under a French mandate, and the rest became a French zone. In the spring of 1921, when the French Government was making dickers with Angora, an offer was made to turn back Cilicia to the Turks, but there was some quibbling over terms, and the deal fell through. We do not exactly see M. Poincaré giving up this bit of real estate without some substantial *quid pro quo*; but perhaps the plan includes a direct purchase on the part of our altruistic Government. Of course such a purchase would immerse us up to the ears in the savoury Near Eastern cauldron, especially as the Moslem population of the territory outnumbers the Armenian population three to one. It is of course unlikely that Congress can be persuaded to vote an initial outlay of twenty millions for the dubious purpose of subjecting half a million Moslems in Cilicia to the rule of a minority; but as an American contribution towards a solution of the Near Eastern problem, the proposal is interesting.

If there are still some hundred per cent Germans in Germany, they ought to be well satisfied with one particular phase of their country's situation; they ought to be very glad indeed that Germany has been effectively quarantined against the infection of foreign ideas. The establishment of the embargo is not the result of patriotic forethought on the part of the German Defence Society, the German Security League, the German Legion, or the German Ku Klux Klan; in the present instance, isolation and insulation are the incidental result of economic processes. In an article on "The Crisis in German Science," which appeared recently in the London *Nation*,

Professor Adolf von Harnack says that "it has become quite impossible for Germans to procure foreign scientific books," since it is out of the question for them to pay twenty to forty thousand marks for a single imported volume. In the view of the patrioteer, this is perhaps a happy and hopeful situation, but Professor von Harnack is sufficiently un-German to believe that his compatriots could learn something from foreigners, even from Americans, if they had a chance.

THE general news this week is not without humour. We observed with interest that a Parisian named Burda, who invaded the Chamber of Deputies with an armful of documents, declaring that he had solved the problem of reparations, was immediately put under observation in a lunatic-asylum. This is all very well, but why is M. Poincaré at large? A man would needs be right smart of a lunatic to devise a more rampantly idiotic and damaging "solution" than M. Poincaré's. We see too that the Anti-Saloon League of New Jersey has passed a resolution calling for mobilization of the army and navy to stop the smuggling of liquor. It would delight our very souls to see this suggestion carried out, but we are afraid that the Congress may be, for one reason or another, a little reluctant about it. We have an earnest and exalted desire to see our fellow-citizens well educated in the nature and meaning of law; and we shall therefore never be quite satisfied until we know that a dictaphone has been installed under every bed and dinner table in the land, and that an agent of the Anti-Saloon League and one of the Society for the Suppression of Vice are on duty at the switchboard, day and night.

ON another page of this issue our readers will find a second letter on the case of the "Lusitania," by Dr. J. H. M. A. von Tiling. We have looked up the references cited by Dr. von Tiling, and find that while the contract between the Cunard Company and the British Government under which the "Lusitania" and the "Mauretania" were built, was not quoted verbatim, its principal provisions were discussed in a long article in *Engineering* of 2 August, 1907. The deck-plans are also given, showing the positions of the guns. That part of the contract covering the arming of the ships, is discussed as follows: "For purposes of attack the 'Lusitania' will be provided with an armament as satisfactory as the armoured cruisers of the County class, because on one of her topmost decks there will be carried, within the shelter of the heavy shell-plating, four 6 inch quick-firing guns attaining a muzzle-energy of over 5000 foot-tons, while on the promenade deck on each side there will be four more guns on central-pivot mountings, also able to penetrate 4¾ inch armour at 5000-yard range and 6 inch armour at 3000-yard range. . . ." It is possible, of course, that this provision of the contract was never carried out. It may be noted, however, that the British Government did not wait until the outbreak of hostilities before arming its merchant-ships. On this point we refer our readers to *Hansard* of 16 March, 1914. There they will find that the First Lord of the Admiralty informed the House of Commons that forty merchant-ships had been armed.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly. It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

MR. ELIHU ROOT is of the opinion that the American people need considerable education in foreign affairs. On several occasions of late he has been delivering himself to this effect, notably in an article in the first issue of *Foreign Affairs*, the new American quarterly with an unoriginal title, and again in a speech in Washington before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the National Civic Federation. Mr. Root believes that this education is necessary because "an ignorant democracy controlling foreign affairs leads directly to war and the destruction of civilization."

No one will be inclined to quarrel with Mr. Root over the advisability of educating the public on the important subject of foreign relations; but his statement that the American "democracy" exercises control over the conduct of these relations seems wholly naive. Perhaps Mr. Root has reached that age where he no longer notices contemporary events; but the average American has had ample opportunity during the past few years to realize that the State Department pursues its mysterious way as remote from his influence or his interests as the mountains of the moon. Not only are its theories and processes beyond the reach of the popular will, but it makes no effort, save on rare occasions, to enlighten the general run of citizens on the various deals and dickers and commitments which it concocts in their name and by their authority. Formal treaties still become matters of public knowledge through the Senate, but such scraps of paper have largely gone out of style. Foreign affairs are mainly conducted through clandestine visits, furtive "conversations," secret messages and whisperings. To such a stage of secrecy have we come that even the members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate are unable to get adequate information on a matter of foreign policy after they have demanded it. This was recently illustrated in the Boyden incident.

It seems curious, since Mr. Root professes such concern over the deplorable state of public information in such matters, that he had no constructive suggestion to make regarding the star-chamber policy of the State Department. The Department ought to know what is going on in the world, for its far-flung personnel certainly costs the taxpayers enough. What a pity it is that Mr. Root did not see fit to suggest that the Department occasionally disseminate some of this information on vital matters! Only the other day Mr. Hughes intimated that he had sent some sort of message to the French Government concerning its proposal to invade the Ruhr. Surely the text of that message, with perhaps some collateral exposition, would have furnished considerable enlightenment on a situation of great significance and importance, about which there is no little confusion in the public mind; but Mr. Hughes offered nothing. Again, a few informative notes about really important phases of the bewildering diplomatic jockeyings at Lausanne, would be immensely clarifying. There are, for instance, the Mosulian oil-fields; is our State Department concerned about getting a share in this rich storehouse for certain American interests, and to what extent and for whom? What benefit, if any, will accrue to the general population in America? Some official information on these matters would surely promote among us a better understanding of the conduct of foreign affairs. How illuminating, also, would be an explanation of the interest of the State Department in getting free access

for warships into the Black Sea! We wonder if Mr. Hughes would be able to illustrate the widespread implications of a decision in foreign policy by pointing out that his assistance in putting a British fleet into the Black Sea probably doomed the five-Power naval treaty of the Washington conference. The logic of the matter is clear enough. The menace of a British fleet in the Black Sea makes it imperative that Russia plan a navy for the Black Sea against the inevitable struggle there; and with such a Russian plan looming plain, the French Government seems bound to reject the treaty.

What a lot our State Department could contribute to public information about its Caribbean policy, if it were so minded! The whole adventure there has been shrouded in Departmental darkness. It is eight years or more since American marines unexpectedly invaded Haiti and absorbed its Government and revenues; yet it was only a few months ago that any direct explanation of this amazing performance was made; and that came from the mouth of Mr. Lansing, former Secretary of State, who has been out of office for three years. The explanation, indeed, was almost as amazing as the fact; for Mr. Lansing justified the aggression on the ground that a boatload of German sailors had been seen to go ashore in a Haitian port about a year before we took possession.

In the abysmal silences of the State Department there has been one persistently piping voice, that of the Tsarist Division. This sanguine group has been almost garrulous at times during the past few years; but unfortunately its outgivings, generally of an anonymous nature, have been uniformly untruthful, so that they have not contributed much to the public education, whatever momentary thrills they may have furnished to *émigrés* of the old regime. It used to be entertaining to read, on the authority of our Government, that the Tsarist Germanophile General Yudenitch had captured Petrograd from the Reds in the interests of democracy, that Mr. Lenin had died again, or that the Soviet regime was positively doomed to vanish within the next fortnight; but after a time this sort of news became monotonous, and we understand that to-day few citizens, with the exception of the officers of a dozen or so "patriotic" societies of a romantic sort, give any heed to the official auguries on Russia, as they come from Mr. Hughes's subordinates.

We recall the case of a group of substantial American business-men who called at the Russian Division in the latter days of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bainbridge Colby, to get some information on the prospects for resuming trade with Russia. One of the young men who received them asked whether they wished to trade with Soviet Russia or with non-Soviet Russia. They replied that they had Soviet Russia in mind, but they would be glad to trade also with non-Soviet Russia if he would point it out on one of the beautiful German maps that adorned the walls of his office. He replied that Americans could not trade with Soviet Russia because the Bolsheviki had treacherously killed 100,000 American soldiers during the war. One of the business-men present happened to have an interest in statistics of war-mortality, for his four sons had enlisted at the first call and only three had come home; so he pointed out that only 75,000 American soldiers had been killed in the whole war, and if 100,000 of these had been slain by the Bolsheviki, it left few to the Germans. To this the young man retorted in menacing tones that his interrogator showed a suspicious lack of patriotism and certainly betrayed a lack of reverence for our Government. Subsequently the business-man learned that this curious official had forehandedly

married, in the good old days, a great Russian acreage attached to a Russian countess, and the revolution had deprived him of the considerable revenues of those broad acres, though it had left him the countess, who was no longer exactly in her first youth.

From that interview the citizens concerned derived neither sweetness nor light. Under Mr. Hughes the sweetness has perhaps increased, but the light is, if anything, even dimmer. Doubtless a considerable source of education would be on tap if we could adopt the British practice of subjecting the head of the Foreign Office, on occasion, to a sort of third-degree inquisition, in public, at the hands of the legislators. This practice does not accomplish much in diverting the Foreign Office from the service of privilege, but it does furnish occasional illumination, and makes the Government watch its step. Mr. Root did not call attention to this democratic habit, much less propose its adoption here. In fact, he seemed to think that the National Civic Federation could arrange all the education in foreign affairs that the American people need; which, considering the somewhat restricted outlook of the Federation, appears to us a bit anticlimactic.

Perhaps, after all, Mr. Root is not a promising mentor as far as foreign relations are concerned. After all, he was one of the advocates of the League of Nations, when the general run of ignorant Americans voted overwhelmingly against lending a hand to open that Pandora's box. Who shall say to-day that their instinct was less wise than Mr. Root's knowledge? Moreover, Mr. Root was once a Secretary of State himself; and that is a grave disability, from which few could recover. Who but a born Secretary of State could be sufficiently romantic to lay down the dictum, as did Mr. Root at Washington, that "more wars come from international feeling because of a belief of insult and humiliation, than come from any mere material thing"? More instructive and encouraging, after all, than Mr. Root's measured periods, was a brief, staccato letter which we noticed recently in the *New York World*, signed "Ex-Conscribed Boob." "What," it asks, "became of the slogans, 'Make the world safe for democracy' and 'A war to end wars'? What became of the fourteen points? What became of our lives, our limbs and our money? I lost a leg in France, but never again. Damn the crooked politicians! Damn the international bankers!"

Apparently, in spite of the conspiracy of silence on the part of the diplomats, the inexorable procession of events grinds here and there into the mind of the common man some fragments of the wisdom of our world.

A CHARTER OF LOOT.

WE have never seen a better or briefer exposition of the legal character of the treaty of Versailles than the following, which occurs in a private letter from Mr. John W. Burgess, who has been professor of constitutional law at Columbia University since 1876, and dean of the faculty of political science since 1890:

Germany and France are again at war. I am going to write you what the situation is *legally*, for I wish you to understand exactly. First, the representatives of the German Government took no part in *forming* the Treaty of Versailles; in fact, they were not allowed to take any part in the work. It was framed by the victorious allies or associates, the United States included, insofar as the President could include the United States. This was the first departure from international precedent.

In the second place, the Germans were simply ordered to sign this instrument without any hearing or protest being

allowed them. This was a second departure from international precedent.

In the third place, this document (for it is not worthy to be called a treaty) contains a provision pledging the Germans to pay such a total sum of money, at such times and under such conditions, as should be fixed by a reparations committee consisting of representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and the United States. As you know, the United States Senate would not approve the so-called treaty, and the United States was not represented on the reparations committee by any active member. The reparations committee consisted therefore of representatives from the four other Powers *only*. This was the rump committee which fixed the sum imposed on Germany with the terms and times of payment.

This committee pretended that it was acting under the treaty of Versailles; but it could not act *legally* under that document, because no committees are provided therein consisting of representatives from Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium *only*, and therefore there is no such committee vested with the above-named powers and functions. The absence of a representative from the United States not only means that the committee which actually laid the obligations on Germany was not a *legal* body under the treaty, but it also means that the member not acting as required by the so-called treaty was the only disinterested party, in any sense, and therefore the very party to which Germany looked for any fairness of treatment, and the only party to which Germany felt she could look.

The conclusion both of law and ethics is that by affixing her name to the so-called treaty of Versailles, Germany never bound herself to accept and fulfill the obligations which might be laid upon her by a reparations committee composed of representatives from Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium *only*.

The British statesmen know this; and on this account, among other reasons, the British Government very wisely and properly declines to take any part in the attempt to execute the requirements of this committee, this rump committee, by military force. It remains also to be seen whether Italy will join in it, and the longer it delays, the less likely will it be to do so.

The legal status is therefore as follows, namely: France and Belgium have undertaken, by a military invasion of Germany, to force the Germans to fulfill the requirements of a reparations committee not established by the so-called treaty of Versailles or by any other instrument having legal validity. France and Belgium have thus violated this so-called treaty and have made war on Germany. The claim that collecting a debt by military invasion of a country, a debt imposed by such a body as this rump reparations committee or, as for that, in any other way, is not war, is unspeakable, insufferable buncombe.

The French army has gone into Germany, into the Ruhr district, for the purpose of breaking up the Empire and annexing the Rhinelands to France. But no matter what their aim is, they are making war on Germany at this moment, and are themselves the violators of the so-called treaty of Versailles.

To the foregoing, we imagine, little need be added. We wish, however, to remark one thing. The formal justification for imposing upon Germany the full responsibility for bringing on the war, rests upon three counts: first, the report of a French attaché in 1913, stating that in a conversation held by the German Emperor, the King of the Belgians and General von Moltke, it was plainly declared by von Moltke that the German army would invade France by way of Belgium. Von Moltke denied this promptly and emphatically, and his denial was never taken up. The second count is the so-called "Potsdam conference," which every one now knows was a pure figment of vicious imagination, no such conference having been held. The third is the Lerchenfeld report, published in the *Bayerische Staatszeitung* of 26 November, 1918, now known to have been deliberately falsified by Kurt Eisner.

Thus the formal justification for making the German Government solely responsible for the war rests upon a canard, a myth and a falsification. This theory of German responsibility, which is the basis of the treaty of Versailles, is, in short, without foundation. Taking this into account, and taking into account the character of the treaty itself, as expounded by Mr. Burgess from the standpoint of international law, what conclusion is possible? Only that the treaty of Versailles is a flagrant, immoral and monstrous violation of both law and justice, conceived for the purpose of sanctioning organized brigandage; and that those who formulated it and those who for nearly four years have been trying to administer it, are no better than highwaymen.

Hard words butter no parsnips; and we are far from wishing to indulge ourselves in a mere idle luxury of strong expression. The point is simply that as long as even a ghostly simulacrum of the Versailles treaty is permitted to stalk abroad, there can be no peace in Europe and no prospect of peace; and as long as there is no peace in Europe, there can be no prosperity here. However the most recent and most perilous French experiment in banditry may turn out—and we think it can turn out in only one way—we expect to hear shortly on all sides a loud cry for the revision of the treaty; and we wish to anticipate that time by saying that no revision of that treaty can possibly be made in consistency or justice. The only thing that can be done with it is to pick it up with tongs and put it in the fire.

In the present state of public affairs, we are staunch "Little-Americans." Our sense of justice is enlisted, as it has been ever since the iniquitous armistice, on the side of Germany. Our sympathies are enlisted on the side of the poor, the suffering, the deluded and exploited, everywhere in Europe. But we see plainly that no good can come from America's participation in European affairs until every vestige of the treaty of Versailles is formally destroyed. The thing for the ship of State to do, in our opinion, is to close-reef its sails, batten down the hatches and get ready for hard weather. All talk of joining the League of Nations, or of undertaking any public commitments whatever while the treaty is even nominally in existence, is treasonable in fact if not in intention. When the treaty is abrogated—well, then it will be time to talk business; but unless and until it be abrogated, we are all for the policy of splendid isolation.

DEBTS AND DEBTORS.

MR. STANLEY BALDWIN, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his colleagues, have been in Washington keeping their rendezvous with debt, and have gone home again, and the American public is not much the wiser. The negotiations with Secretary Mellon's debt-adjusters, in spite of their vital interest to every taxpayer—by which of course we mean every producer and consumer—were characteristically conducted with all the secrecy of a private deal in real estate. We gather, however, that no agreement was reached, or at least none that could at present be made public, so it may be assumed that the American people will be subjected to further generous dosages of propaganda calculated to inspire admiration and pity for their impoverished British cousins, and to demonstrate that virtue is its own reward, and that Americans should feel such pride at the honour of being let in for the struggle to save civilization, in the way it has been saved, that they ought to be most amiable about the credits.

Probably in time this propaganda, on which the Government of our impoverished British cousins seems able to spend uncommonly large sums, will prove effective; but meanwhile it will be well for Americans not to be too greatly distracted from certain vital considerations about this British debt of four billion dollars; to pay the interest on which, American taxpayers are being mulcted to the tune of some \$200 million a year. This money the American Government borrowed through the device of Liberty Bonds which bear interest at from three and three-fourths to four and three-fourths per cent. Some of these bonds have since been refunded here, at progressively higher interest, though we have seen no comprehensive summary of these transactions. The interest-rate charged against the British Government on paper, is four and one-fourth per cent. Before Mr. Baldwin's visit, various British statesmen were almost boastful in their insistence that Britain would pay every cent of this obligation. Mr. Baldwin made a similar emphatic declaration on his arrival; yet, as we glean from the none too conclusive news-reports, his proposals to our Debt Funding Commission were of quite another colour. If we are to credit the reports from Washington, Mr. Baldwin struck the sounding lyre, and sang of interest at three per cent or less; a portion of this to apply to an amortization of the principal. In other words, our scrupulous cousins would agree to pay, for a period, part of the interest, provided the principal were to be progressively wiped off. Of course this is not paying every penny; it is a polite form of repudiation. If any American doubts this, he can easily put the matter to a pragmatic test. Let him go to a bank which holds his mortgage or his note and propose a "refunding" along these lines. We are confident he will receive, in the best King's English, a competent definition of the word repudiation.

It seems too bad that Mr. Baldwin could not have come before the American taxpayers without hypocritical flourishes, and said: "We owe you a thumping debt. We are your best customers; you are ours. If we must pay, the process must so dislocate the balance of trade between us as to bring hardship and suffering to both of us. The debt is a millstone around your neck as well as ours. Will you agree to chuck it?" That would have been an honest proposition. We are all for repudiation, but we can see no reason for calling it refunding, or anything else but what it is. We are for cancelling the British debt, partly because we believe the British Government has no intention of paying, and partly because it is to the interest of Americans, as a plain business-proposition, to have no intention of letting them pay. Of course we are also in favour of wiping off the other six billions loaned to other European Governments for their several ventures in war and imperialism. Every American with any sense of reality is eager to lift the whole sum from the live columns of the ledger, and transfer it to the long tally of profit-and-loss items chalked up against the disastrous investment in Wilsonism.

A STRIKE OF READERS.

THE announcement of Frederic Harrison's death will have sent a few readers, at least, back to "The Choice of Books," the freshest and most stimulating perhaps of all the writings of its voluminous author. Harrison was neither the first nor the last of those hardy souls who have attempted to draw up a list of the world's indispensable books, but it can be truly said of him, as it can not be said of the others, that, having led us

to the water, he makes us want to drink it. There is something so healthy and whole-souled in his finely tempered enthusiasm that the mind that lingers over his pages finds itself insensibly enlarged; and one experiences again for the moment the sensations of those men of the fifteenth century for whom the classics were born anew. Harrison's infectious ardour is that of a practised Alpine climber, in literature as in life.

"The intellectual system of most of us in these days," he says, "needs 'to purge and to live cleanly.'" This is the problem which, in one of its aspects, Mr. Orage considered in a recent essay, the problem of "recovering one's health after newspaper-poisoning," and there is no doubt that a sound regimen in the matter of reading might contribute a good deal to the re-establishing of our mental health. It is not the newspapers alone, nor even the products of what Harrison calls the "noisy book-fair" of the day, that clog and confuse the contemporary mind: with every season it becomes more and more evident that we are the supine heirs of the most anarchic of all the literary generations. Save in the field of experimental science, the thought of the nineteenth century may be described in general as a chaos of impassioned guesswork, so idiosyncratic and at the same time so flushed with genius that its power of attracting has been equalled only by its power of depolarizing the human spirit. Under such conditions, the mind comes to resemble a sort of English channel: there are so many cross-currents and the imagination is whipped up in so many contrary directions that all traces of a prevailing ground-swell are lost amid the froth and the spume and the clash of little waves. If this is the case with the modern mind throughout our Occidental world, it is particularly true in America because of our lack of any strong, central intellectual tradition. Here, more than elsewhere, humanity has lost touch with its own bases, its own common reason; and it is we of all peoples who most need the purge of which Harrison speaks.

Now it might be supposed that everything has been said about the classics that can be said. It is a truism that in the great books of the world all minds meet one another; that, as they turn the pages of "Don Quixote," for example, they find themselves possessed with the same thoughts, the same impulses, the same desires, and those the very thoughts, impulses and desires that they most like to be possessed with. It would be easy to exaggerate the importance of reading, and its effects; nevertheless, what an unexplored margin of human possibility these admitted facts about the classics reveal to us. "There is in man," said Goethe, "a force—a spring of goodness—which counterbalances egoism; and if by a miracle it could for a moment suddenly be active in all men, the world would be at once free from evil." It is in reading, more frequently perhaps than in any other experience, that people become aware of this force in themselves; as they read, if the book happens to be "Faust" or "Lear" or "The Brothers Karamazov," they feel at times as if the miracle of which Goethe speaks were actually on the point of taking place. They are prepared for it; they are, so to speak, potential co-operators in it; and there is no telling what they might be able to accomplish if, in such a mood as this, they were presented with a focus for their energies. Statesmen, if they had fully grasped this principle, might, in the days when they possessed genuine power, have worked wonders with it: by means of it a benevolent despot might alter the face of the world in six

months. As matters stand, we can only propose a voluntary strike of readers. What would be the consequence if a considerable body of the public were to boycott the contemporary press, abstain for a year from opening any modern book or glancing at a line of modern print, and devote all their hours of reading to the works which, by common consent, contain the purest essence of humanity? One can not but suppose that a concerted movement of this kind would have its immediate reverberations even in the political sphere. In the sphere of morals, thought and taste, it would certainly produce nothing less than a revolution.

CELUM, NON ANIMAM.

IN the midst of that unsightly quarter of New York City where the workers in Potash and Perlmutter's six thousand shops busy themselves each day with the cutting and stitching of a hundred thousand garments, one may discover the graceless structure which houses the Rand School of Social Science. For some years, this institution has represented the Marxian revolt against a life of underpaid machine-tending; and the people who gather in the classrooms of an evening have generally centred their attention upon the problems of economic evolution and revolution. Obviously the discussion of economic theory yields no immediate release from economic fact; and it is therefore not surprising that a great many of the Randsmen should now have turned away from the study of socialism, in the direction of such courses in art and letters as are also offered by the school. A similar change of heart is observable at the local forum of the League for Industrial Democracy (formerly the Intercollegiate Socialist Society); and these manifestations are perhaps typical of the trend of the times.

It is plain enough that our friends do not depart from the field of economics as victors, in search of new worlds to conquer. Rather it would seem that the withdrawal is due in large part to the same world-weariness that caused so many men to leave the ruins of Rome for St. Augustine's City of God. Through every vicissitude of fortune, there survives the belief that there is some good that is permanent and abiding, and in a period of confusion and disillusionment such as that through which the world is now passing, men are likely to seek a direct contact with this abiding good, through the medium of religion or the arts.

We wonder if each of our readers has not felt the temptation again and again, during these last eight years or so, to turn his back once for all upon the news of the moment and the problems of the day, and to occupy himself henceforth with the things of the spirit. We confess to a full measure of this feeling; in fact it sometimes comes so strong upon us that we can hardly force ourselves to lay hand to the morning paper. We have some notion of what our socialist friends have gone through with—or at any rate we think we have—and we understand their present feelings as well as we understand our own.

When the young socialist acts on the impulse to abandon economics and politics for the arts, and attempts to move in the direction of the good life, he finds, however, that he is hitched at the end of a very short tether. He can not get his living as an artist; and the teacher who has faced a class of night-school students knows that the weight of the day's work hangs also upon the worker's leisure. It is useless to counsel him to be in the world, but not of it; for he can not separate his spirit altogether from his body, or his body from the machine.

Æsthetic other-worldliness will not make the worker free; for the time being, his indifferentism may even make him all the more easily exploitable. On the other hand, even a limited contact with the best in art and letters will necessarily tend to enrich and humanize his spirit. If the contact be continuous, the most that can be hoped is that he will eventually develop such a rich and humane ideal of the good life as can not possibly be built up in a mind that is preoccupied exclusively, or even primarily, with the problems of material existence. He will know how to employ his leisure, and he will want more of it; but any adequate concept of the good life will envelop his working-hours also; it will fill him with the belief that he and his fellows must somehow learn to conduct the operations of modern industry in the spirit of artistic endeavour which characterized the guild-work of the Middle Ages. When he has felt the force of an æsthetic ideal that embraces work as well as leisure, it will still remain for him to return to the field that he once abandoned, and to work out there an economic system that will make the good life generally realizable. It will still remain for him and his fellows to become doers of the word, and not hearers only.

THE DRAYTON SONNETS.

THE admission that some of the Elizabethan sonnet-sequences were addressed to abstract or ideal mistresses rather than flesh-and-blood heroines, implies an insincerity of purpose which is an appraisal wholly unjust, worthy only of Sir Sidney Lee and his numerous clan. Of this critic, Mr. Arthur Symonds remarks, "His fixed idea is that poets are very prosaic people at heart, and that the Elizabethan poets in particular were persons rather lacking in emotion or imagination, who translated and adapted the poems of French and Italian writers with great ability." Sir Sidney Lee's observations concerning the sonnets of William Shakespeare and the sonnets of his fellow-knight Sir Philip Sidney may afford harmless amusement except to those readers who overestimate his parts as a judge of poetry; among them this sort of criticism has done much to discredit and render ridiculous not only the minor but even the major Elizabethan sequences. The sonnets of Sidney, Spenser, and Drayton are read by a few enthusiasts; the sonnets of Shakespeare are with difficulty detached from all the nonsense—pestiferous nonsense, as Mr. Machen would say—that has been written about Mr. W. H. and the Dark Lady. Shakespeare did unlock his heart! He didn't! Mr. W. H. was Willy Hughes, the Earl of This and That, William Himself! The Dark Lady was Mary Fitton (a blonde, by the way); she was an abstraction; she was Anne Hathaway suddenly restored to favour! Such goings-on as these have presented a pretty spectacle indeed to the poor wretches who would fain enjoy the poems themselves. There is no excuse for it; nowhere in criticism can be found a more shoddy and lewd suburb of the intellectual city.

In protest, let us ignore absolutely the origin of Drayton's sonnets, and, strangely enough, consider them as literature. Grouped under the vague title "Idea," they are the least vague and the most outspoken poems of their time. The segregation, under various absurd names, of the single sonnet LXI, "Since there's no help," tacitly implies that the rest of the series is negligible. This is far from the truth. Mr. Symonds, the most sensitive of modern critics of the Elizabethan period, concedes that "there are a dozen others only less fine than this one." Let us add, there are a dozen others more interesting.

Out of the sixty-three which compose the cycle, about one-fifth are unadulterated conceits, banal when they were written, unreadable now. But in most of the son-

nets, conceit has yielded to a chemical change in the crucible of the poet's mind. They are, indeed, the old components, but entirely reorganized, sometimes with a nimble satire, sometimes with a vigour that recalls Donne, always with the steady heat of honest passion. Take, for example, the classic conception of the poet conferring immortality on the beloved; a favourite theme with the Elizabethans, familiar in its Shakespearean dress:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Drayton is not content with the conception in itself; he must vent his scorn of the minxes he beholds in the streets of the city; he must condescendingly inform his chosen lady of the happiness of her fate in being enshrined in his verses:

How many paltry, foolish, painted things
That now in coaches trouble every street,
Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings,
Ere they be well wrapp'd in their winding-sheet!
Where I to thee eternity shall give,
When nothing else remaineth of these days,
And Queens hereafter shall be glad to live
Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise.
Virgins and matrons reading these my rhymes,
Shall be so much delighted with thy story,
That they shall grieve they liv'd not in these times,
To have seen thee, their sex's only glory;
So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
Still to survive in my immortal song.

There is an irritable intensity to this, a nervous exaggeration, which quickens the old, arrogant thought with a new liveliness.

Sonnet LIX is a riot of proverbs and euphuisms—all that we are accustomed to condemn as lapses of taste in the literature of the period. Yet, after *Love and The Lover* have exchanged their witticisms through the three quatrains, the poet himself, unable to support any longer this parody on his passion, impatiently cuts into the banter with,

And having thus a while each other thwarted,
Fools as we met, so fools again we parted.

This trick of reappearing, with heart bare, after playing with verbal masques of emotion, is frequent with Drayton:

Thus am I still provoked to every evil
By this good, wicked Spirit, sweet Angel-devil.

Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou mightst him yet recover.

After performing the usual tricks with the word heart, he cries

Why talk I of a heart when thou hast none?—
Or if thou hast, it is a flinty one.

Then, having worn out his patience with conceits from Roman mythology,

I conjure thee by all that I have nam'd
To make her love, or, Cupid, be thou damn'd.

It is not in the couplets alone that the lover pushes his fist through the scenery and peers out to see how goes the play. Here he devotes the fourteen lines to some homely episode of his suit; there he gives us a glimpse of some contemporary event or fashion. Now and then a whole poem is given over to smooth, lyric numbers; more frequently the sonnet-form strains under a gust of anger or of spite. The atrabilious fancy of Sonnet VIII affords us, I suspect, far keener insight into a

The four vast districts which compose modern Poland—the *krolewstwo*, Galicia, Posen and the eastern outskirts—are at present anything but amalgamated. To a considerable extent, in fact, each leads an independent life. Each section has its own criminal and civil codes, or rather the codes of the State to which the district formerly belonged. From the economic, agrarian, political, cultural, and other standpoints, each district represents a distinct entity.

It would seem that with such a composition of the body-politic, a democratic State could not possibly be erected on the principle of provincial autonomy and State federation. In reality, however, notwithstanding its progressive and democratic Constitution, modern Poland does not by any means heed the conditions imposed by its own natural composition. Its administrative apparatus is highly centralized, and the principal concern of the Government is the modifying of the local and ethnographic peculiarities of the different parts of the country. This centralizing and levelling tendency asserts itself most forcibly in the sphere of the national policy of the Polish State. The case of Poland stands as an historic example of the way in which a State based on the national principle may degenerate into a highly nationalistic State, and how in conjunction with this, the principles of national liberation are with paradoxical haste replaced by social discriminations and the practice of persecution.

I visited, for the most part, the outskirts of Poland, and I must say that the forcible Polonization practised there is comparable to the blackest periods of the nationalist policies of Russia and Austria. An especially painful aspect of this policy is found in the eastern outskirts where, as already noted, the Polish element is almost wholly restricted to the officials and gendarmes. In spite of this, all the courts and administrative institutions in these sections are required to use *exclusively* the Polish language; the signs over the stores must also be in Polish; all governmental institutions are completely Polonized. In Galicia, the courts which at the time of Franz Joseph recognized three local languages, Polish, Ukrainian and German, now recognize only one—Polish.

The chauvinistic tendencies of the Polish Government are strikingly revealed in its boundless anti-Semitism, with which both the Government and various social circles are infected. While commenting on the peace of Versailles, Mr. J. M. Keynes, in his famous book, "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," sarcastically remarks of the Poles that they have so far failed to show ability in any occupation except Jewish pogroms. In this aphorism there is, unfortunately, very little exaggeration. The Polish Government, especially in the persons of its minor officials, veritably lives and breathes by Jewish persecutions. Even while they were in the midst of the tragic fight against the Bolshevik armies, waged for the very existence of the Polish State, the Poles found time to invent for the benefit of Jewish privateers the most exquisite humiliations, including their segregation in the concentration-camp at Yablonki. No superior qualifications, either intellectual or patriotic, could save the Polish Jew from the odium of belonging to the despised nation. Aszkenazy, an ardent patriot, one of the best Polish historians, and the official representative of Poland in the Council of the League of Nations, was blackballed for a professorship by the Council of the Warsaw University, and the sole reason for this action was openly declared to be the fact that Aszkenazy was a Jew.

The present Constitution of Poland was adopted at

an elective assembly (*seym*), on 17 March, 1921. The spirit of the Constitution is distinctly democratic. It contains an article about general representation, one about the responsibility of ministries to the *Seym*, one about the autonomy of the courts, one about the equality of citizens, and several about liberties. There is even a short article, conceived in the spirit of modernism, which declares that every citizen has a right to State protection of his labour and, in case of loss of working-ability, or sickness, to State compensation. According to the Constitution, the President's status corresponds approximately to that of the President of the French Republic. He is elected at a joint session of both houses of parliament. Article 46, which is evidently directed against Pilsudski personally, states that the President is not permitted during war to fulfill the functions of a commander-in-chief. In so far as it bears upon the rights of citizens and the whole spirit of the administration, the Constitution of 17 March, 1921, is in fact and will probably remain for a long time to come, a mere paper Constitution, having no effect whatever on the course of real life.

Officialdom in Poland is on a very low level. This is recognized even by the most enthusiastic Polish patriots, who, while admitting this fact, usually add by way of extenuation that it is due to the complete absence of a Polish personnel under the old Governments. It is true, as a matter of fact, that in Russia and Germany, Polish officials were barely tolerated, and that even in the Polish sections of both Empires all administrative positions were filled by foreigners. As already stated, these conditions did not obtain in Galicia, which formed part of the late Austro-Hungarian Empire. It thus becomes clear why the Polish administration is forced to appoint as governors (*voyevoda*) and as chiefs of districts (*starosta*), former managers of estates and other persons who have no previous experience whatever in administration. These unseasoned administrators—as I have learned from personal experience—are, moreover, intensely conscious of their own importance and treat the public in an exceedingly high-handed fashion, barring certain instances, not too infrequent, when they prove almost too lenient and accessible. Graft flourishes in Poland, even more so than in Russia—and that is saying a great deal. The population enjoys but little personal freedom. The "*defensiva*," the detective police and other such institutions are ubiquitous and all-powerful. They are especially ferocious in the eastern outskirts, where they can operate under the pretence of fighting Bolshevism. Throughout the length and breadth of Poland, life is made burdensome by all sorts of rules and restrictions.

The courts are also in a deplorable condition. Juries are unknown throughout the entire length of Poland. As a prosecuting attorney quaintly put it: "The ethical sense of the people is as yet undeveloped." Meanwhile, until it does develop, courts consisting of three judges try cases and impose sentences, including capital punishment. These judges, it may be noted, are not always men of higher education, as justices of the peace are often included on account of insufficient personnel. I have myself witnessed a case in court, where the prosecuting attorney demanded capital punishment for the defendant, while the court sentenced him to fifteen years at hard labour. The entire case did not take more than twenty minutes.

As my stay in Poland was brief, the impressions of its economic life which I carried away are somewhat indefinite. To judge by external symptoms, trade and industry are gradually reviving from their

war-time lethargy. This lethargy was especially deep in Poland where the three and a half years of German occupation were accompanied by an absolute cessation of all economic activities. During that period Poland was cut off from the rest of the world, while Germany took of her resources everything of which there was a shortage at home—food, coal, copper, etc. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that for Poland the war came to an end not with the signing of the armistice on 11 November, 1918, but on 18 March, 1921, the date of the peace-treaty of Riga. It is only natural, therefore, that not everything that was destroyed in industry and transportation has been replaced, that not all factories are running, or all railways yet rebuilt.

In spite of all this, however, the beating of the economic pulse is, if anything, faster than usual. Trade especially is conducted in the face of a continuous rise in prices and of wild speculation. The greatest nervousness and instability is introduced into the economic life of the country by the fluctuations of the currency, which since the war have been the curse of all Eastern and Central Europe. Until recently, the Polish mark held the record for the amplitude of its fluctuations and the rapidity of its depreciation. During the last few months, however, it has been outdone by the Austrian crown. The degree to which currency is unstable in Poland can be gathered from the following example: mortgage-loans made before the war in gold roubles are being paid up in marks at the rate of 2.16 for a rouble. When I was in Poland a mark was worth 0.00005 dollars, whereas the pre-war rouble was valued at more than 0.5 dollars. In this case the depreciation of the currency was profitable to the landlords and ruinous to the capitalists, who had entrusted their savings to them. The capitalist, again, as a tenant, paid rent to the landlord approximately according to the same calculation (i. e., in marks on a pre-war basis, with a slight percentile interest). In this case it was the landlord who came out the loser.

ALEXIS GOLDENWEISER.

(Translated by Alexander A. Goldenweiser.)

WILLIAM BLAKE.

It is astonishing, in spite of the many works on William Blake that issue yearly from the press, how little his real philosophy is appreciated. The public has been baffled so long with hints of mysteries and madnesses that it has come to regard Blake's work as too eccentric and obscure to repay personal investigation. This attitude seems to me to be completely wrong. Blake's thought was clear and deep; his poetry subtle and strong; his painting luminous and of a high quality. He tried to solve problems which concern us all, and his answers to them place him among the greatest thinkers of several centuries.

The attitude of modern criticism towards Blake to-day is analogous to the attitude taken towards Beethoven not so long ago. The world at large then admitted that Beethoven had written many charming things in his younger days, but held that his last twenty years were matter for the maddest enthusiasts only. The poor man's complete deafness had cut him off so entirely from humanity that theory overcame him: he was carried to the clouds by his hippogriff; and whatever transcendental heaven he wished to express, the human ear was physically incapable of supporting his harmonic monstrosities.

So with Blake; the "Songs of Innocence" are read everywhere, yet we lack a correct text of "The Four Zoas"! The lyrics are in every anthology; yet profes-

sors of literature wonder if the epics are worth reading!

I confess frankly that, when I began reading Blake, I thought him mad and the "Jerusalem" trash. But as the pages turned, and plane after plane of sanity was opened before me, my conversion began. Now I firmly believe that the last of Blake's works are his greatest; that the "Jerusalem" ranks with its contemporary, the "Inventions to Job."

Neither taste nor opinion, however, can serve as the basis for criticism. The only possible method of judging a man is to find out, first, what he tried to do; secondly, whether or not he did it; after which, in a mere coda, one may venture one's individual decisions on whether or not it was worth doing. Blake tried to do what every mystic tries to do. He tried to rationalize the divine ("to justify the ways of God to men") and to apotheosize the human. He tried to lay bare the fundamental errors which are the cause of misery. These errors he sought, not in codes of ethic, nor in the construction of society, but in the human soul itself.

It is the fashion among a few enthusiasts to compare Blake with Shakespeare. The absurdity of such a comparison is obvious. Great men can seldom be compared with one another. Nevertheless, the two fit curiously together: Blake was the complement of Shakespeare. The Elizabethan poet recorded all the types of humanity but one—the mystic: the Georgian recorded no other but the mystic. One saw individuals everywhere; the other saw man. The first hardly systematized human problems; he beheld only situations to whose solution he gave no clue: the second saw problems everywhere, to be solved by reason under the guidance of inspiration. One hid himself, and identified himself so well with his creations that we can hardly say what Shakespeare was like; while from Blake's writings we could reconstruct his very features. Shakespeare found life a dream rounded by the sleep of death: Blake found life a dream to be followed by a more glorious awakening than we can possibly imagine. Both were poets who translated everything into the terms of humanity.

Here lies the root of Blake's greatness. His feet stride from mountain to mountain; and if his head is lost among stars and clouds, it is only because he is a giant. His heaven is no abstract of metaphysics; it is a map which charts the soul of every living individual. His God is not a dim and awful principle; he is a friend who descends and raises man until man himself is a God. By dealing in universals, Blake came to that point where such diverse temperaments as Milton, Fra Angelico, Nietzsche, El Greco, Paracelsus, Shelley, Michelangelo, and Walt Whitman may be invoked for fair comparisons. It is, in a way, not a bad proof of Blake's greatness that so many dissimilar sects claim him: the revolutionaries, the Theosophists, the vers librists and their opponents, the spiritists, and so on. One can treat of Blake as an alchemist. There have been prominent Catholics who have welcomed many doctrines of this hater of priests!

But I have wandered far from my thesis. What Blake tried to do I have briefly described; whether or not it was worth doing one need not say. Whether or not he did it—just there is the centre of the critical vortex.

Blake did not believe in unveiling the truth completely. He always held something in reserve. He not only cried to mankind to "put on intellect"; he made that faculty necessary if his works are to be understood. There never was a greater intellectual

snob. He elaborated a marvellously woven veil for his sanctuary, so heavy that none has moved it very effectually, so beautiful that none has refused some genuflection. This was not due to cowardice or caution. When Blake spoke out, none could be bolder than he. Nobody in his own age approached him for boldness. Even now, we who recognize his purity, hardly dare repeat some of his doctrines. There are poems printed with the asterisks of prudery; there are drawings which have not been reproduced nor even described. We admit our silliness; yet we lack courage, even after this lapse of a century and more, to repeat Blake's own words, safely dead as he is. Can we then condemn his reticence? Before we condemn, we must know that it was deliberate, and furthermore, was in accordance with the most sacred traditions of all ages and races. Blake does not cry "*Procul, profani!*" but he baffles all such by requiring that first they put on intellect. No swine can ever reach his pearls. He charts us the road to Eleusis, he gives us the keys of paradise. But he conveys them in symbols whose meaning he stipulates that we first learn. We must find the meaning. Too many in this world mistake the word for the thought: we juggle with terms as though they were magical formulæ. "*Hoc est corpus*" becomes hocus-pocus; and the way is lost. Blake simply removed the word to preserve the meaning.

He had two methods of charting his way through the inexpressible: these were poetry and painting. Herein he was far more fortunate than the average mystic, who has no means of grappling with the ineffable. Poetry and painting were the two torches which lit "the fury of his course among the stars of God and in the abysses of the Accuser." To be dazzled by those twin lights, to consider him as author and artist only, is an unfair shifting of emphasis. His arts were tools, not ends in themselves. That he paid immense attention to the perfecting of his tools is beside the point. He himself realized that the sweetness of his early lyrics seemed self-sufficient; so later he subordinated literary effect to higher aims. He wanted to rouse with thought, not to lull with beauty. He judged all art, all poetry, by the magnitude of its conception; and so he expected to be judged in turn.

In trying to fix Blake with reference to humanity, we seem at first to repeat the astronomer's difficulty of determining the curve of a comet. But Blake was not such an irrational and unrelated phenomenon. The sea of time and space alone makes him appear a solitary island. The first of the Romantic Revolutionists, he was soon followed by innumerable others, many of whom unwittingly and quite independently gave their names to the most striking parallels. Astonishing as these parallels are, especially in the case of Shelley, they are caused by similar methods of thought under similar circumstances. The identity of, say, Urizen and the Demiurge is neither accident nor coincidence.

There is a certain type of critic in whom the will-to-believe ousts the ability to judge thought without bias. These have been content to point scornfully to these very parallels, in an attempt to brand Blake as anti-Christian. It is quite true that no history of what I may call "gnostic Christianity," from Simon Magus to Eliphas Lévi, could afford to ignore Blake. But Blake's great idea was to synthesize all these contradictions. He was not shocked to find in such philosophers more truth than had ever been admitted. He saw that no sincere thought could be wholly untrue, and, therefore, wholly rejected.

At heart, however, Blake is one of the great Christians. The strangeness of his language has often repelled the orthodox; his attacks on priesthood have irritated many sects; and his generosity towards all truth-seeking has seemed heretical. Yet behind all this, we find Blake becoming more and more passionate, even dogmatic, over the essentials of the Christian faith. His tenderest lyrics, his most turbulent vortices of design, his inexplicable nadirs of thought, all resolve eventually into one thing: Man in the arms of God.

The world has long since done its worst towards Blake; and he has emerged triumphant, with the twin crowns of poet and painter. But this is not enough. The modern Trismegistus must receive his third crown, that of philosopher, before his permanent place among the great of this earth can be determined.

S. FOSTER DAMON.

THE FARCE OF THE "PROMETHEUS."

AFTER the lapse of even twenty-three centuries and more, it is sufficiently easy to catch in the ear of fancy some echo of the roars of laughter with which Athenian audiences before and after the death of Pericles must have hailed the farce that won for Æschylus his final triumph over the traditional Thespian theatre. The fight that Æschylus fought was, indeed, a hard fight, the hardest, possibly, that ever had to be fought out for supremacy in the theatre. When all other tactics had failed, his critics dragged the first real playwright, and perhaps the greatest of them all, before the magistrates of the city. The innovations of Æschylus were as shocking as all that to the old Thespian school, but this extravaganza of the "Prometheus Vincitus" was a last straw, perhaps.

The "Prometheus Vincitus" is a tragedy in an Æschylean sense only, and all Athens, however accustomed it may have become to the excruciatingly funny on its stage, seems to have been taken by storm. A quite superficial acquaintance with the tone of the Greek intellect suffices to convey an idea of the merriment this great play evidently occasioned at the expense of the crew of politicians just lifted into power. Many a farce since the first performance of the "Prometheus Vincitus" has been put together in the same mocking mood at the expense of politicians, but Voltaire himself was less sarcastic in Bourbon France than Æschylus must have seemed in the Athens of Cimon.

It should be explained for the benefit of all who have neglected the classics in the original tongues, and with perfect respect at the same time for the effects achieved by our own George M. Cohan, that even he has nothing to match the pasteboard—or was it parchment?—heifer gallivanting hither, thither and yon in vain efforts to give that gadfly the slip. The mirth all through this elaborate squib is so uproarious that even the translation by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who got her Greek from Doctor Dryasdust, does not altogether obliterate it. Vulcan contrives to be quite as funny, despite the author of "Aurora Leigh," as Æschylus meant that he should be. As for the versions still promulgated by Oxford scholars, they invariably suggest the ease of an Irish Roman Catholic from Cork who is passing himself off as a Russian Jew in Moscow.

No scenario-expert in our own California to-day attains greater "continuity" than Æschylus gets out of his ironical Prometheus, turning everybody and everything into ridicule as he sprawls pinned to the edge of that precipice. Justice requires some acknowledgment of the tremendous advantage enjoyed by the ancient Greek in his capacity to evoke jests from the lips as well as gestures from the limbs of his cast. Then there was the music, which we

may assume, with all deference to modern syncopated time, to have been altogether on a higher level than anything we hear to-day in New York's dens of cinematography.

Nevertheless, it was upon his dialogue that Æschylus had to rely if his Prometheus were to be rescued from the dullness investing him in, say, the Potter version, with which so many college students are bored to death. If the young men and women who nowadays are tortured through Greek studies, were but permitted to realize how funny Æschylus is when his mood is truly Æschylean, there might be a good laugh among them at Potter's imperviousness to the farcical quality of the dialogue he serves up in the best Cambyzes vein. If we could imagine the "Pinafore" of Gilbert and Sullivan done into ancient Greek "tragedy" by young ladies at Vassar who had been taught that the piece was "religious," the result in actual perusal would be very like the effect upon the "Prometheus Vincetus" of the Potter version—or any other version of its school. Poor Arthur in "Little Dorrit" is conscious of going downstairs in a highly ridiculous manner because Flora insists that he put an arm around her waist as an act of homage to their dead love, and in reading the "Prometheus Vincetus" through the medium of Potter one feels that this is serious Flora's solemn version.

Æschylus, then, was the foe of the traditional, the dull, the "religious," in every one of Doctor Dryasdust's implications. Æschylus—the point will bear repetition—was an innovator in the theatre. He was regarded by all pillars of the Thespian tradition as a blasphemous interloper. His novelties were all so daring that they could have justified themselves only through their effects upon an audience. It is quite true and yet a little misleading to insist upon the detail that Æschylus invented dialogue as an element in these stage-effects of his. He did that, but this innovation was incidental to yet another departure from all Thespian tradition.

Scenery, in an old, realistic Belascan sense—not in any new, symbolical German sense—was originated by Æschylus. There is a possibility that he was somewhat slavish in his creation of illusion, for he used perspective and properties in quite the style of Victorian melodrama. His supreme glory as a constructive genius of the theatre was the conversion of the play into a spectacle on every plane. He designed the costumes of the actors. He elaborated the dances of the chorus. He anticipated all modern playwrights in writing parts to fit his actors. The general effect of everything was not merely movement, of which there had been enough before, but action to advance what we now call "plot." Æschylus did what he could to let a "plot" emerge. What all his innovations have to do with "religion" has still to be made obvious to anybody but Doctor Dryasdust. Had the genius of Æschylus been less comprehensive—had he been a mere inventor of dialogue or a theologian as Victor Hugo persists in making him—he must have failed in his determination to force his theatrical reforms upon a bewildered magistracy. There would have been no public opinion at Athens to sustain him. Æschylus narrowly escaped a prison cell as it was. He was accused of impiety, and certainly the effects wrought throughout the "Prometheus Vincetus" are all those of roaring farce.

Consider, for instance, the background of high boulders and that "business" of fastening Prometheus to these boulders in the course of the horse-play between Strength and Vulcan. This opening scene is itself as farcical as anything ever attempted by Shakespeare with his clowns, or as anything that could be quoted from W. S. Gilbert. The notion that Prometheus must be chained to a cliff in a lonely land lest he go on being good and kind to people, is in the characteristically mocking manner of the

Athenians when they refer to politicians.

This jest at the expense of Greek politicians in general is driven home when Vulcan points out—in a line quite crazily mistranslated under Oxford auspices—that a new administration can be hard and heavy-handed. The notion that office is bestowed upon politicians for the mere delight it affords them to clap their opponents into prison was a trifle too deftly satirized by Æschylus when he seemed to be siding with Cimon against Pericles. The difficulty that beset Æschylus throughout a glorious career was this same ineradicable propensity to make fun of politicians in the manner made too familiar by the "Prometheus Vincetus." Only the prodigiousness of the hit which the piece made caused the magistrates to hesitate before actually sending him to a cell.

The art of mimicry had attained perfection among the ancient Athenians, and full advantage of the fact was unquestionably taken by the actor who played Prometheus. The pinning of Prometheus to the rock evoked, beyond all doubt, a whirlwind of merriment which the dialogue is designed merely to sustain. Every imaginable effect of farce is wrought into the stage-effect as Strength perspires with the effort to put a little energy into Vulcan. The horse-play goes the length of actual chains and a clownish contortion of the limbs of the victim. He, all through the jesting and the gymnastics of this howling scene, is silent, but we may rest assured that Æschylus did not permit him to remain motionless. The effect of a suspension of the sense of humour in any interpretation of this farce according to the canons of Doctor Dryasdust is typically illustrated in the case of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who makes Strength observe to Vulcan and Vulcan retort to Strength in this ladylike style:

STRENGTH. Still faster grapple him—

Wedge him in deeper—leave no inch to stir!
He's terrible for finding a way out
From the irremediable.

VULCAN. Here's an arm at least
Grappled past freeing.

STRENGTH. Now, then, buckle me
The other securely. Let this wise one learn
He's duller than our Zeus.

VULCAN. Oh, none but he
Accuse me justly!

STRENGTH. Now, straight through the chest
Take him and bite him with the clenching tooth
Of the adamantine wedge and rivet him.

No man with the slightest suspicion of what Æschylus is really driving at can witness a performance of this version by Mrs. Browning of the "Prometheus Vincetus" by a lot of young ladies in a seminary, without nearly suffocating from suppressed laughter at the "religious" solemnity of the proceedings. Doctor Dryasdust is too solidly entrenched in the "classics" for even a smile to seem anything but a display of positive ill breeding. "He is pompous," writes Elizabeth Barrett Browning with reference not to Dryasdust but to Æschylus, "he is pompous, too, sometimes, but his pomposity has not any modern, any rigid, frigid effect. When he walks, like his actors, on cothurni, we do not say 'How stiff he is!' but 'How majestic!'" So far as the "Prometheus Vincetus" is concerned, the observation is no less relevant to the late P. T. Barnum than to Æschylus.

Barnum would have revelled in that heifer (no less effective than his own woolly horse) not as that heifer is explained away by Doctor Dryasdust but in her original Æschylean aspect as she kicks up her heels at every sting from the proboscis of the gadfly. One looks around despairingly for a parallel in all contemporary burlesque to that heifer in the "Prometheus Vincetus," for she plays her part in what one now refers to as the eternal triangle.

Io, transformed into a heifer, stands in the Æschylean scene for the young lady with whom the politician newly in power at Athens is hopelessly infatuated. This politician is referred to in the play only as Zeus, precisely as the wife of that politician becomes Hera or Juno for stage-purposes, Prometheus being the candidate for office whose defeat led inevitably to his ostracism. The situation is so familiar to a student of ancient Athenian politics that the names of all the parties in the case—with the exception of that of the heifer—might be gleaned from a somewhat casual perusal of any history of Greece.

The greatness of the piece arises from the ease with which Æschylus, even in what Doctor Dryasdust would call the catastrophe, steeps the part of Prometheus in the comic spirit. For the sake of getting his fun "across" or "over," Æschylus must depart from the tradition that chained Prometheus to a rock in the Caucasus. Moreover, for the sake of the local political hits, he must foretell her wanderings to Io in a fashion that sets geography at flat defiance. One is tempted as well to suspect that in contriving his heifer Æschylus anticipated a device made familiar in modern burlesque by having a specially gifted actor take the part of the hind legs. Otherwise it is not easy to account for the prominence given the gadfly in the shrieks and leaps of Io each time she feels again that she is stung.

Doctor Dryasdust, naturally, gets around the "difficulty"—anything suggesting that Æschylus could be funny raises what to Dryasdust is a "difficulty"—by denying both the heifer and the gadfly, the one in the capacity of actual cow and the other as anything more than something or other buzzing behind the scenes. Io, according to Doctor Dryasdust, was represented on the stage as a maiden with horns.

The play closes with what in the original Greek is the most brilliant of all the Æschylean jests. The firm earth rocks. The thunder roars. The flames flash. Sands are whirled. Billows rise. As the landscape dissolves around him, Prometheus remarks that this time the ground is shaken by something besides words. The hit here at the expense of the "god" who had just stopped talking would alone account for the arrest of Æschylus, and still Doctor Dryasdust can not see that the "tragedy" ends as it began, with horse-play and a joke. To dear old Doctor Dryasdust, Æschylus remains all that he was to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and as a character Prometheus is "religious" and the heifer is "religious" and the gadfly is "religious." Doctor Dryasdust can not see that Æschylus got into trouble not for mocking the gods but for making the politicians look contemptible.

ALEXANDER HARVEY.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

AN IMPRESSION OF ITALY.

SIRS: They say in Latin countries that revolutions come when least expected—like tropic thunder showers. But here in Italy, violence is more or less a normal means of expressing public opinion in an imperfect democracy—a throwback to the Roman popular assemblages on the Capitoline Hill and the town-meetings of the mediæval city-States. Violence was inseparable from such gatherings, and even to-day piazza-demonstrations provide a crude but reliable way of determining the most vigorous—minority.

Nor does the seizure of a public building mean very much. The Government, knowing the temperament of the people, merely waits till the demonstrators tire of sitting up all night on picket-railings and eating out of tins of Armour's beef—cheap here since the war. Or if the unruly ones prove unusually obstinate, the Govern-

ment makes many promises; and no one can make promises so gracefully as an Italian politician. If a revolution does occur, it is hastily cloaked over with the symbols of legality—as in Signor Mussolini's case—and all the old cliques of political patronage flock to the new stand.

But such strife has its ugly repercussions. Our room overlooking the Piazza Venezia in Milan, in March, 1921, proved better than box-seats at a series of performances which at that early date still possessed novelty. The Communists and Fascisti fought a number of pitched battles beneath our eyes, two of the victims being a woman in the last stages of pregnancy and a servant-girl shaking out a rug on a distant *terrazzo*. One night about eleven o'clock, our windows puffed inwards when a bomb exploded with a terrific roar in the Diana Kursaal Theatre across the way. For two hours, amid much bawling and jostling confusion, the medical corps of the police force carried out the dead and injured through an unruly throng of bystanders. In Florence, eight months afterwards, I was in a motion-picture house when the audience stampeded to the exits at the false alarm of: "Bomb!" and my imagination was stabbed with the horror I had witnessed in Milan.

Travelling through the country, one can scarcely believe that this feudal bitterness is gnawing at Italian life. The vineyards and olive-orchards of Tuscany, surrounded by their slim cypress trees, look half wild as they have always looked, but they are being cared for, by seemingly contented people. The fields of the Po valley stretch away in an endless green and brown panorama of flax and barley and wheat and alfalfa. The littorals of the Adriatic and the Tyrrhenian Sea are richly cultivated; peasants are at work; crops are being harvested. Or, passing down the avenues of any Italian city, one observes that the people have good clothes and plenty of ready money. The cafés are jammed at all hours of the day and night. The wine-shops are always noisy. The arcades are peopled by animated promenaders. Only in Madrid have I seen such daytime idling as in the cities of Italy.

These contrasts were never brought more sharply to my attention than in Ferrara last year. Ordinarily that city, with its broad, sparsely-frequented streets opening to the monotonous plain that stretches to the Adriatic and the Po river, wears an aspect of profound melancholy, of proud but brooding isolation. D'Annunzio in his "Laudi," speaks of it as a wide, deserted place, but luminous; rich in sky and water, air and soil; seeping with moisture from the encircling sluggish streams; a city, above all else, grave with voluptuous memories—*chiara sfera d'aere e d'acque* curtaining the mediæval walls with *melancholia divina musicalmente*.

But on the twelfth of last May, the avenues, "broad as rivers," carried the flotsam of jostling Sansculottes. Something of mediæval grimness hovered over tower and battlement, something of the spirit of the days when Parsina and Hugo paid for their amour with death; only on this more recent occasion, the grimness was lightened by no pathos of blasted love, but only the harsh facts of material existence. Fifteen thousand Fascisti and unemployed had crowded into the city to protest against the dilatory tactics of the Government in the matter of relieving unemployment. Most of this throng was forced to sleep on the grass outside the Strade di Circonvallazione or on the hill of Montagnone—nothing short of torture in this mosquito-infected Emilia country. The following day demonstrations were held on the Montagnone and before the gigantic *entrata signorile* of the old castle of the House of Este. As a result of this action, the National Fascist party was able to force the Government to promise a million and a half lire for the immediate

construction of public works, principally road-building, and to grant liberal loans for similar undertakings to the bankrupt provincial communes.

All this agricultural region of the Adriatic Delta district, the most prosperous and fertile in all of Italy, has been in an uproar these past two years. Yet walking beneath the colour-drenched bizarre arcades of Bologna I could scarcely grasp the reality of this modern warfare, of careening trucks of Fascisti, of chance scuffles, riots, and stray bullets. The quiet brooding of the centuries overshadows it all, and gives this violence an aspect of flashy insignificance. In the half-crumbled, mossy inner court of the university in the Palazzo Celesi, with its rows of many-coloured shields, beneath the stained arches where groups of long-haired students were gathered, I said to myself: "Here is the fountainhead of greater loyalties, of calmer faiths, and more introspective verities." But long before the enthusiastic founding of this institution in the Middle Ages, occurred the agrarian conflicts of republican Rome, of which the modern struggle seems but a noisy echo. Long before the *legge frumentaria* of the Gracchi, and down to the present, land was and has been the real key to Italian prosperity and politics—land, always land. The severing of healthy relations between city and country, as much as any other one cause, hastened the decay of the old empire and partially explains the transitory character of the political Renaissance. One of the post-war phenomena in Italy which contributed to the disorder and uncertainty, was a concerted boycotting, in Russian fashion, of the cities on the part of the organized peasants. Indeed, the present situation very much resembles that faced by Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus 2050 years ago when he stalked the streets of Rome with his body-guard of three thousand volunteer-citizens. The same conditions exist to-day: pressure of population, war, exhaustion of the soil, and absentee ownership (though absenteeism is not the curse that it is in Spain). The great estates of southern Italy and Sicily are farmed out to farm-usurers in much the same vicious manner that characterized the Roman provincial administration.

The modern world has given Italy its problems and its violence—old passions writhing in new breasts—but the modern gift of scientific method and industrial organization has largely passed Italy by. This country, it is true, has given to our times some of the greatest scientists, engineers, educators, philosophers, and inventors: Marconi, Croce, Montessori, Ferri; but between these outstanding intellects and the people yawns an enormous gulf unbridged by practical, adaptable minds. Curiosity, both of the canine sort, noted by George Eliot in her "Romola," and of the exalted type recommended by Matthew Arnold, has been the key-characteristic of the Italian mind. The Italians have always been discoverers, and Columbus was neither the first nor the last. But theory somehow fails to link with practice. The Italians merely pass the flame on to other peoples.

Thus the Italian peasant still remains the most inefficient in Western Europe. The Italian workman produces less per day than the workman of any other important European nation. Every country nowadays is fumbling in the attempt to give practical application to the great mass of modern scientific learning; but in Italy, the vital connexion is almost lost. There is still a superstitious torturing of knowledge by a people too emotional and too religiously mediæval to be lovers of precision in the application of truth. To these problems and to the violence and accumulated rancours that are eating into the foundations of Italian life, this sleepy, antiquated university of Bologna only sends back the faint echo of its dripping, time-worn stones. I am, etc.,

Rome.

CARLETON BEALS.

MISCELLANY.

AN official commission of Englishmen coming to this country seems always to bring in its wake a large influx of compatriots of a professional type. One notices this in the visitor's list of certain clubs where vestiges of the colonial spirit still survive, and where the House Committee is imbued with the amiable spirit of Mrs. Leo Hunter. I see that as usual there have been many such arrivals lately while the commission on refunding the British debt was at work in Washington. Presumably these visitors come here with the idea of seeing the country and observing the people, and I sometimes wonder what they get out of it, alike whether they study us as vacationists or avocationists or as mere *flâneurs*.

For instance, I wonder whether they ever really come into contact with the organized social pursuits of one of our small towns. I have before me the social calendar for one average week in a mid-Western city of 70,000 people. This calendar, published in a local paper, announces for Monday twenty gatherings; twenty for Tuesday; thirteen for Wednesday; twenty-four for Thursday; five for Friday; seven for Saturday and three for Sunday. Forty-eight of these gatherings bear the name of clubs—bridge clubs, current-events clubs, domestic science clubs, reading clubs, an Emerson club, a Schubert club, a "classical club," whatever that means, and so on. A few church societies appear on the list—curiously few, only three of them, in fact. There are six dancing-parties, four luncheons, one dinner and one sewing-bee. It is, I believe, supposed to be a peculiar responsibility—or a prerogative—of the American woman that she should shoulder the brunt of social duty; yet it seems odd that every blessed one of the ninety-two gatherings here listed should be officially a women's affair, with not so much as the name of one lone, lorn man anywhere on the roster.

Now that I have laid out my exhibit, I hope I shall not be expected to analyse or psychologize or psycho-analyse it, either in behalf of the Rotarians and Chambers of Commerce or in behalf of my old friend Mr. Sinclair Lewis and the general theme of "Main Street." Such things are for the young, the ardent and vigorous; old age brings uncertainty and irresolution, and I contentedly leave these tasks to others—like Master Janotus de Bragmardo, I covet little henceforth but "my back to the fire, and a good deep dish." I merely remark that my exhibit is a significant sample of the United States, and one that can not well be ignored in even the most superficial study of our civilization.

I AM told that some who go to the moving pictures in the hope that once in a while they will be rewarded with a glimpse of beauty or a turn of genuine fun, are becoming a little discouraged, and are wondering what to think of their fellow-countrymen who continue patiently to endure these entertainments. They do not complain of the long stretches of dullness; these have always been there. They do not resent the bowl of dough into which the comic gent will inevitably fall, or the feverish unreality of the romances, or, for that matter, the stale moralizing and the precious worldly-wisdom which serves to dress up the more audaciously imbecile dramas. They have even the patience to endure for a little longer, perhaps, the ludicrous meddling of the boards of censorship in view of any of the events of life in which the instinct of sex might conceivably play a rôle not sanctioned by the Epworth League. These little matters have come to be part of the convention, like the dearth of properties on a Chinese stage.

THE intolerable thing, however, is the amount of brutality which the moving pictures freely exhibit; and unless I am mistaken, the run of brutality has increased these last few years. It is a rare melodrama, nowadays, which does not exhibit a long hand-to-hand fracas between the thug-villain and the thug-hero; and these encounters are prolonged until the law of diminishing returns comes into play and the saturation-point of horror is reached. Usually the fight is unessential; usually the purposes of even the worst plays would be just as well served without it; but in some form or other, apparently, the producer is bound to introduce a particularly bestial display of the unhumane passions—thus taking his little revenge upon the censor, perhaps, for having to maintain such a preposterous attitude towards sex.

THIS tendency, I say, appears to be growing of late; and friends tell me that they heard not so much as a murmur the other night when a man who had attempted murder was dragged over the country at the end of a rope, only to be shown at the end of this gallop as a blackened mass which the avenger manfully threw into the stable, with no more concern than he might have displayed upon a forkful of manure. This scene happened to be doubly vicious, because it was put into a play devoted wholly to anti-Japanese propaganda, in the best Ku Klux tradition; and the villain very opportunely happened to be a coloured man; that is, a Japanese, upon whom this cruelty was inflicted with the sense of a just warning and a just reward.

I HAVE seen the pictures printed in the *Crisis*, of the charred bodies of Negroes burned at the stake. My friends assure me that the body of this Japanese, as presented on the screen, was just as frightful to contemplate; moreover, one had been fulsomely treated to the whole process of torture, from beginning to end. It would take a good deal of ingenuity to invent anything more evil in intention and more debasing in effect, than this picture; and I am wondering how low our producers and our audiences will have to sink before an honest reaction sets in. The fact that this picture was passed by the New York State Board of Censorship is a wonderful tribute to the efficacy and humane sense of that body; so in addition to its effect upon the public taste, this exhibition adds a new lustre to the institution of censorship.

JOURNEYMAN.

ART.

THE POPULAR ARTS OF MEXICO.

A CIVILIZATION and a culture of one type or another have existed in Mexico, according to a recent estimate of Mr. George E. Hyde, for about seven thousand years. One people has inherited from another, and the Mexicans of to-day possess something from every period of their great past; their history as a republic consists of a long series of struggles for freedom which are the more heroic because the foe to be overcome has been almost always allied with disloyal or ignorant elements within the country. Certain of the laws of Mexico are regarded, by expert foreign observers, as the best in existence; the National University dates back some three-quarters of a century earlier than the oldest university in our country. Yet in spite of all that might be said of our neighbour, almost the only questions asked of the traveller returning from Mexico, are about oil, revolutions and the opera-house—the last the least happy memory of the three.

There is no denying the interest that attaches to the oil and the revolutions, their relationship with each

other and with the present state of the country. The publicity accorded to the opera-house, however, is merely one of the freaks of journalism; the size and cost of the building having been, as it were, crown-jewels in the glory of the Diaz Government. The fact that should be told is that the work is a failure from the ground up, in the most literal sense of that phrase. One wishes that the ground, which has sunk under the weight of the gaudy building and compelled its abandonment, might hasten its work, destroy this temple of the Philistines, and thus rebuke those impious souls who try to force upon a country a thing opposed to its genius. There is a connexion, after all, between the oil and the opera-house, for the latter was built with money derived from the complaisant traffic of the old regime with those who exploited the national resources for private gain; and the continuing revolution in Mexico is the protest of the defrauded people against the injustice of which, vaguely but surely, they know they have been the victims.

Fortunately, however, there is in Mexico an art that bears no relation to this anomalous and still-born piece of pseudo architecture. While for centuries the wealth of the mines and other great resources of the country has been drawn off by the Spanish invaders and their successors, the people, if not in nominal possession of their soil, have always possessed free access to it. Thus, no changes in religion, in ownership, or in a Government that has enforced the will of the church and the proprietor, have been able to destroy the character of the popular art of the country—an art of the soil, as truly as any that has ever existed.

Although only a political frontier divides this soil from our own, in its origins and conditions Mexico is as remote from the United States as any of the Asiatic countries. Indeed, despite the Spanish blood in the people and the purely Spanish language that is spoken by a majority of them, even a Spaniard feels himself completely foreign in Mexico and far more closely allied to descendants of Europeans like ourselves. The first fact to be borne in mind regarding Mexico is that it is an American country: Indian blood predominates everywhere, and is in many places quite pure; while in all but a few localities it has so completely assimilated the admixture of European elements that it is only with difficulty that these can be traced in the appearance or the mentality of the people.

It is true that the magnificent Mexican art of pre-Hispanic times has not been carried on consecutively. The political subjugation of the country by the Spaniards, the thoroughness with which they destroyed the old monuments and manuscripts and restrained the expression of the old ideas, brought about a new era in Mexico, which is probably farther removed from its Aztec civilization than it is from that of the United States. The art-production of contemporary Mexico thus falls into three categories. First come the popular arts which, being nearest the life of the people, represent them most intimately and fully. Then there are the forms derived from the Spaniards, chief among which is their architecture, an admirable development of the Spanish Renaissance style, modified by generations of local builders and still vital in its traditions and its applicability to the present-day needs of Mexico—one of the few countries of the modern world that has thus kept alive an art which, almost everywhere else, has ceased to exist. A third category is composed of the work of the painters and sculptors who, as men, remain as fervently Mexican as every one else in the country, while as artists they find themselves obliged to follow the European ideas that have

virtually no influence on the other two types of art. It is impossible, within the scope of this article, to dwell on the remarkable painting that is being produced in Mexico to-day. Disregarding also the arts of colonial origin, I shall confine myself to the anonymous but not impersonal work of the craftsmen, the art that is of the people and for the people.

It is when one looks at the pottery, the glassware, the basketry, blankets, furniture, lacquers, toys, etc. of modern Mexico that one realizes what her past and her isolation have meant to her. The guide-books, after describing the beauties of the Talavera ware with which the kilns of Puebla continued the splendid work of their Spanish predecessors, tell us that the things displayed in the popular markets to-day are "without artistic interest." But as one walks through the markets in any part of the Republic, in the capital or in the smallest village, and examines Mexican popular art, not in comparison with things unrelated to it, but for itself, one rubs one's eyes in wonder. Here are the things for which we turned to Japan before her industrialization; the things which the Europe of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance produced and which we now search out with such eagerness, and place in the show-cases of our museums. The guide-books speak the truth in one sense when they say that the modern pottery is not like the Talavera of the old time, for that was the "Queen's ware," intended for the palace and the cathedral, while the poorest peasant uses these works of the contemporary folk-art in the ordinary round of his life. If a dish breaks, another may be bought at once, although on some shelf in every little house there are usually several particularly fine specimens that are not set on the table every day. These productions are of no special brand; they are merely the best pieces of a firing, which the owner has had the luck to spy out before his neighbours have seen them. How the dark eyes peer into the little stock of wares at each stand in the market, and how exactly they estimate the quality of the work!

These are the same eyes that have lighted up before the marvels of ancient art in the museums. In no other country are past and present so closely linked. Any day, one may see barefooted Indians, old men and women, young mothers with their babies, lovers and children, in the museum, re-reading the tale of their ancestors, which is for them as an open book. To be sure, they do not know the dates which their archæologists are now working out so laboriously. They may not know the exact derivation of each symbol on the old sculpture and architecture, but the forms on the monuments have been continuously in service from the earliest times, and the Mexican people of to-day like them and use them with an always fresh inventiveness. They use the European word for the universal scroll-design, calling it a *greca*, but they do not think of Greece when they apply the pattern to a basket or a garment; they think of the great palace of Mitla whose stones are an inexhaustible repository of design—even as the churches of Europe offered the lines of their architecture and decoration to the lace-makers and other craftsmen.

One has proof of the vigour of the popular arts of Mexico when one considers their power of absorption. Before me are a basket, a thing entirely of American origin, a box imitating Japanese lacquer, a vase whose form derives from the Chinese (importations from the Orient came during the colonial period), and a glass-painting composed of Christian forms. All of the four types of work are equally Mexican, the age-

old habit of assimilating the culture of an invader having overcome the disparities among them. They are regional as well as national, for each locality has its special tradition and no other place produces anything quite like it. For hair-ribbons and sashes of a certain powerful design and beauty of weaving one must go to the village of Milpalta; nowhere else but in a certain little mountain place, far from a railway, can one get the gorgeous embroideries of San Miguel Ameyalco, a town to whose Spanish name clings, in true Mexican fashion, the old Indian title. Perhaps after one has gone there one will not be able to buy what one wants, for such embroideries are made not for sale but to be worn by their makers, and whatever price one may offer, it will be only as a favour that one can get them. Even where objects are made in quantity, as in the case of pottery, the best pieces are at once bought at the kilns by the towns-people and local dealers.

Thus the popular art of Mexico, coming so directly out of the soil, binds the people to their land and is one of the explanations of their boundless love for it. The Spaniards knew what they were about when, in bringing Mexico under their heel, they destroyed as much as they could of the ancient art that spoke to the people of the greatness of their country.

WALTER PACH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE "LUSITANIA" AGAIN.

SIRS: Since the question of the armament of the "Lusitania" has come to the foreground again, would it not be of great help in settling the moot question to look up and reprint again the contract between the English Admiralty and the Cunard Line, under which the Cunard Line, with the money provided by the Government, undertook to build and operate the "Lusitania" and the "Mauretania"?

Under this contract the "Lusitania" was to be equipped with *twelve six-inch quick-firing guns* which were to be under the shelter of heavy steel plates and on central pivot-mountings (which, I take it, means that the guns can be pivoted away out of sight). If the "Lusitania" was *not* armed, the conclusion seems inevitable that the Cunard Line had not fulfilled its contract and that the English Admiralty was negligent in its duty, for this same contract provides for periodical inspections by the Admiralty.

This contract was published in the London weekly *Engineering*, of 2 August, 1907, and was reprinted in the same journal on 14 May, 1915. In the same journal are to be found also the "deck-plans" of the "Lusitania" showing the position of the guns: four of them *forward* on the promenade-deck and eight on the shelter-deck. These plans were, by the way, reproduced in the book of Charles E. Lauriat, jun., "The 'Lusitania's' Last Voyage" (Houghton Mifflin Co. 1915), so that they should be easily accessible for inspection. I am, etc.,

Poughkeepsie, New York.

J. H. M. A. VON TILING.

A COURTEOUS RESPONSE.

SIRS: I have just read the letter of Dr. Sunderland in your issue of 27 December, and I want to say at once that the passage in Mr. Neilson's book to which he refers was not familiar to me when I wrote the articles. It no doubt ought to have been, but in point of fact it was not. I may say, that to the best of my knowledge and belief the mutilation seems to have escaped every one's attention, judging from the letters that I have received about my articles in the *Forward*, and none of my own immediate colleagues were acquainted with it. Indeed the fact that the last sentence was suppressed by Sir Edward Grey when he read out the Cambon letter to the House, has come as a surprise and as "news" to every one here as far as I know. It only shows how even the closest students of the documents concerned with the great war can

overlook points of vital importance. Perhaps the voluminousness of that literature is an excuse.

I write this at once, as although my own writings on this subject and the facts that I have dug out are almost universally pirated without acknowledgment, I am always, I think, myself particularly careful to quote authorities and I should, of course, have been more particular than usual to do so in the case of my friend, Mr. Neilson. I therefore venture to make, through your columns, my *amende honorable* to him. I am, etc.,
London.

E. D. MOREL.

STERLING IGNORANCE.

SIRS: I doubt not that your eagle eye nabbed the following choice morsel from the Chicago *Tribune* of 10 January; but to make doubly sure, I quote verbatim:

"The Rev. A. A. Ebersole of the Russian Relief sought relief among University of Chicago students yesterday for pupils [*sic*] of Russian universities, but was given a quick dismissal with the remark that his plea was 'childish' and that Russian students 'weren't worth helping.'

"It was the coldest and most unusual reception I have ever received," said the Rev. Mr. Ebersole as he quickly departed after his interrupted address before the senior council. 'I have never received such treatment.'

"He came before intelligent [*sic*] students with an emotional plea and no knowledge of the cause for which he asked aid," said Andy Scott, senior representative of the council. 'The students in Russian universities are not worth helping. They are lazy and unworthy. If they went through a hundred universities, they would still not benefit society.'

"We let him talk for thirty minutes, and then it was so evident that his lecture was valueless that we cut it short with a frank statement that we would request the law-students not to contribute. If we donate for educational purposes it will be to help American ex-service men—not lazy, communistic Russians.'"

The loathing that is revealed by this event unfortunately reduces me to a state of inarticulate disgust. I hope that you will call due attention to it somewhere in your columns. All I can find breath to say is *Anathema!* I am, etc.,
Chicago.

J. ARTHUR SWINSON.

THE BRITISH IN IRELAND.

SIRS: In your issue of 3 January Mr. Padraic Colum sharply takes issue with certain statements of mine regarding the situation in Ireland. I would point out to the distinguished author of "Wild Earth" that we are in reality quite in accord on the subject under discussion. My contention was that the so-called Free State is the old English regime under a new name. This contention Mr. Colum substantiates by explaining that "General Mulcahy" instead of taking orders from the very busy General Macready has in reality taken over Macready's office and is himself busy at Macready's old job—of forcing Irishmen to become British subjects.

Mr. Colum accuses me of failing to consider two important facts: (1) that the Irish plenipotentiaries signed a treaty with the representatives of the British Government; (2) that the treaty was ratified by the Irish National Assembly. I submit that the Irish plenipotentiaries never signed a "treaty," and I give ex-Premier Lloyd George as my authority: "treaty (in this case) means not an international agreement but a treaty like that which was incorporated in the Act of Union of 1800." To the ears of any Irishman this will sound like an ominous comparison.

Furthermore, the Irish delegates to London had no authority to sign. Paragraph three of their "Instructions from the Elected Government of the Irish Republic" clearly states that "the complete text of the Draft treaty *about to be signed* will be similarly submitted to Dublin and *reply awaited*." But their signatures were wrested from them by threats of "terrible and immediate war." These facts, not "certain forces in Ireland" made the instrument (as it is called in official British documents) null and void.

The terms of the agreement itself prevent the so-called Free State from coming into existence legitimately, for they provided for ratification by a body which never existed in Ireland (Article Eighteen of the instrument). Neither the

instrument nor the Constitution has yet been ratified by Dail Eireann, which has no power (see the speeches of Griffith, Mulcahy *et al.* in the Dail on 10 January, 1922), or the House of Commons for Southern Ireland (Article Eighteen) which never existed, or the people of Ireland, who have never voted on the issue of the Free State (Collins-deValera pact, 20 May, 1922).

We should all like to believe, as does your distinguished correspondent, that British forces have gone from Ireland but, eliminating personal knowledge of the case, Article Seven of the instrument and Clause One of the annex thereof refute Mr. Colum, guaranteeing "to His Majesty's Imperial force" complete control of Ireland's four best ports for ever. I am, etc.,

Ballston Spa, New York.

A. J. REILLY.

BOOKS.

HOCH HABSBURG!

"*Mon métier, c'est d'être roi*," Louis Quatorze is said to have replied to strictures upon the pomp of his establishment. Baron von Margutti's "The Emperor Francis Joseph and His Times"¹ is a tribute to pomps that have crumbled to dust within the memory of children still at school, and at the same time a pretty complete compendium of this kingly job. A loyal son of Irredentist Italy, the Baron began his court-career in 1900 as orderly officer to one of the Imperial aides-de-camp. He appears to have speedily gained the affection and esteem of that lonely and hidebound potentate, Franz Josef, and from the day when the news was bruited in court-camarillas that he had been granted the supreme honour of an imperial hand-clasp, his advancement was rapid. Von Margutti was a keen observer, intelligently alive to the nature of the drama at which he was assisting, and with a taste for gossip; and he proves an entertaining and illuminating guide to the last days of the Habsburgs. Driven by bewigged coachmen, we rumble with him in gilt ceremonial coaches from Schönbrunn to the Opera House, from the Hofburg to the Capuchin church. As State guests at tables laden with gold and silver plate we watch the aged Emperor, taciturn and distraught in his tightly buttoned tunic, being served by his two "loaders" in green and gold with silver baldrics and hunting-horns slung over their shoulders. We pace through minuets and mazurkas to the strains of Mozart and Gluck, with pellised voivodes and hospodars from the eastern marches of the most romantic of all empires. We follow the successor of Theodoric and Charlemagne as he walks bareheaded behind the canopy and through the streets of his capital on Corpus Christi Day. We are witnesses of the haughty gesture of humility in the Redoutenstaal on Maunday Thursday when the last Austrian Cæsar to die in the purple washes the feet of the Viennese poor "with a napkin dipped in water from a golden basin." And throughout the imperial pageant, like the drum-taps in Tchaikovsky's symphony, sounds the ever-present menace that no faith can conjure away, no statecraft avert.

What lends their peculiarly spectral quality to the last years of the Austrian Empire is that the doom was so clearly foreseen. Even when the clouds that were to envelop the rest of Europe lay yet well below the horizon, they hung, massed and threatening, over the Habsburg realm. Of all the great European States, Austria-Hungary was perhaps the one where life was the happiest for the greatest number of people; yet the mildness of its rule never compensated for the initial vice of its foundation in violated nationhood.

¹ "The Emperor Francis Joseph and His Times." Baron von Margutti. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$6.00.

All the unstable intellectual forces that in self-determined countries shatter themselves against economic inequities found a nucleus and a plea for reputable existence in the fight against the Habsburg dominion. No reign since legendary Lear has been so full of tragedy as that of Francis Joseph. It was his lot, during its seventy hapless years, to see one fragment after another of his fragile inheritance break away and drift into other orbits. Braver soldiers never drew sword than those which made up his armies, yet they were beaten again and again until defeat became an evil habit and until, when victory arrived, as at Custoza, they were ignorant how to profit by it. The fate of the Empire was made manifest by the enemies who hugged it tighter and tighter with every decade—Irridentist Italy on the south, insatiate Russia with her swashbuckling Slavic protégés on north and east, the swollen German cousin across the western marches. The fate of the dynasty was written even plainer in the character of heirs and kinsfolk, men and women too undisciplined or too cynical to take their inheritance seriously and whose scandalous lives and tragic deaths, for years before the Emperor laid down his tarnished sceptre, were carrion for the flies of the yellow press.

Was the Austrian Empire worth saving, and could it have been saved? In a chapter on "Francis Joseph and his Peoples," von Margutti devotes considerable space to examining the theory that, by the timely grant of autonomy to the Slavic constituents, permanence might have been given to the distracted realm. But it is not evident that he is convinced by his own arguments. Two things, it is clear, combined to wreck the heritage of Franz Josef from within; one, the Bourbonism of the aged monarch, the other the far bitterer intransigence of the Magyar "die-hards." The first might have been overcome, was, in fact, overcome at the eleventh hour by the force of circumstances and the rigid sense of duty which was the core of Francis's strangely mixed character. The second was insuperable. Hungary emerges from von Margutti's book as the villain of the piece, the evil genius of the dual monarchy. Against every effort of the Austrian Kaiser to get on better terms with his Slav subjects, the Magyar ruling caste upreared itself like a wall of granite. It lied to its monarch, it cajoled, frightened and when necessary bullied him.

These races [the non-Magyar nationalities] were cut off from their king; all legislation affecting them was the outcome of Hungarian suggestion, and it was therefore natural that they should gradually transfer to the Emperor the hatred they had long been nursing against the bullying Magyars. . . . The Emperor's official Hungarian advisers had successfully impressed on his mind the pre-eminence of the Magyars. He ended by believing it.

Had Franz Josef possessed a spice of opportunism or been less the slave of his bargain with Hungary in 1867, one does not need von Margutti's clear hint to see that the chance was offered him to make a great political *coup*. Taking advantage of the general hatred of the Hungarians, which even Saxon Transylvania shared, he might have rallied all the non-Magyar elements behind him by the grant of autonomy and a generous federal constitution, and have crushed the head of the serpent. No violence to his own feelings was involved. He passed all his life under the shadow of an abiding hatred and mistrust of his Hungarian subjects, and never spent a month willingly in their country. When at last, on the very eve of his death, universal suffrage was conceded as a desperate remedy,

it came too late. The social democrats who were elected arrived in Vienna with a clear mandate to place national grievances in the forefront; the Magyar landlords would have none of the accursed thing and, as a result, "sane legislation soon became impossible. In the crucial period of the war, Austria presented a humiliating spectacle. The western half of the Empire had to be governed autocratically on the basis of paragraph fourteen of the emergency law."

Might the dual monarchy have been saved by a wiser orientation of its foreign policy? The Baron makes it clear that the Emperor was not blind to the danger of the growing hostility of Russia and the completeness of his commitments to the German ally. He often used the fatidic phrase "Drei Kaiser Bund," Margutti tells us, and always "in a tone of longing." There was a moment, about 1908, when strong forces were at work to bring the "three kaiser league" about. Prince Urussov, the Russian Ambassador in Vienna, and Count Kageneck, the German military attaché, were prime movers in the scheme, and the old Emperor, never forgetful that Russian bayonets had saved him his Empire in 1849, was in its favour. But the scepticism of Count Aehrenthal, his Foreign Minister, wrecked the plan and, as a crowning disaster, its failure was attributed at St. Petersburg to German hostility and designs on the East.

One other dramatic opportunity to restore flexibility to the anchylosed policy of his Empire reached Franz Josef, and it is quite evident that he understood the sinister threat that lurked behind it. Taking advantage of his "cure" at Marienbad, Edward the Seventh of England twice visited Ischl to urge upon his veteran cousin the loosening of German ties. It is significant that von Margutti has no air of giving the world news not generally familiar when he states that the main point in King Edward's plot was that Germany should be "kept busy" by an embroilment with Russia in the menaced interests of British commercial supremacy, and that Serbia, for which the whole world went to war six years later, was to be the reward of Francis's perfidy. What arguments the royal ambassador extraordinary used we are only permitted to conjecture, but their force may be guessed from the fact that the second interview, during a long ride together at Ischl, nearly killed the sorely tried octogenarian, and that he shirked the ordeal when it was offered a third time. "He was quite broken and seemed utterly worn out," the faithful aide-de-camp tells us. "Even at dinner he had hardly a word to say, and he had to make a supreme effort not to collapse in his chair."

Not loyalty alone, but affection and even superstition were fighting against the counsels whispered into Franz Josef's ear during that long drive through the forest. For the three decades during which they endured no cloud ever overshadowed his relations with to-day's hermit of Doorn. The late pontiff declared that merely to lean upon the arm of a burly American cardinal filled him with new hope and vigour. It may well have been that for the lonely and overtasked old ruler, whose brain reeled as he looked into the future reserved for his Empire and race, the embrace of this German Michael, white-cloaked, helmeted, romantic, chivalrous and the master of invincible hosts, was like strong arms round a drowning man. Russia had saved the Apostolic throne that he might ascend it. Germany—could it be doubted?—was the instrument preordained to preserve it to his heirs. Alas! the whimsical gods, that of old had been propitious, and were now athirst.

Nothing will so strike the imagination of the future

historian when the great European change is viewed in perspective, as the blindness of the three potentates of Central Europe to the truth that they were three piers of a whole conception of government, fated to stand together or to perish under its ruins. M. Paul Louis, the French syndicalist writer, puts the case with irresistible logic in his monograph "Le Bouleversement Mondial" when he says:

The Romanovs, Hohenzollerns and Habsburgs had been friends or enemies by turns throughout their history, but everything attests that dynastic bonds had survived all conflicts of cabinets or shocks between nationalities. It is very doubtful that William II wished to destroy Tsarism, for he was clear-sighted enough to perceive that in so doing his own power would suffer damage. Francis Joseph preserved a sort of veneration for the Russian Empire, which, since the suppression of the Hungarian rising at the beginning of his reign, appeared to him as an instrument of Providence. As for Nicholas, he would have hesitated before delivering the final assault to one or other of the two monarchies, whose dismemberment would have had as a logical consequence, the break-up of his own. . . . The catastrophe came about simultaneously for all three and it did more than carry away three monarchies. It gave the death-blow to the principle itself of personal and hereditary power and to the entire mechanism associated therewith.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

COMIC DRAMA OF THE RESTORATION.

MACAULAY's counterblast to the enthusiasm of Lamb and Hunt for Restoration comedy has effectively destroyed or turned aside an interest that might have gone almost as far as did the interest aroused by Lamb, Coleridge and Hazlitt in the Elizabethan drama. The consequence has been that except for the works of Dryden, Wycherley, Congreve and one or two others, the comic drama produced between 1660 and 1700 is nearly inaccessible, and is known at all only to specialists. The large number of people who still hold Macaulay's attitude towards this whole body of literature will inevitably condemn Mr. Montague Summers's volume of "Restoration Comedies,"¹ for the theme of the three plays therein reprinted is the almost invariable one of Restoration comedy. The rest of us, taking the bold indecencies as an integral part of the genus, and regarding them as either essentials of any faithful picture of the time, or, with Lamb, as pleasantries indigenous to some "Utopia of gallantry," must rejoice at the recovery of these three specimens, inferior as they are to the best of their kind.

Whether the selection of plays is the best that might have been made, is a matter of opinion; each of them, on one count or another, justifies its inclusion. "The Parson's Wedding" of Tom Killigrew the elder has the most doubtful claim. The intrigue of this farce is highly complicated; the four or more threads of interest are unskilfully interwoven; and the piece is written so largely in the slang of the day (insufficiently elucidated in the notes) that the result is confusion. Edward Ravenscroft's comedy, "The London Cuckolds," is by contrast a model in the management of several lines of interest, and its prose, without losing the flavour of racy speech, is pellucid. "Sir Courtly Nice," by John Crowne, the third play in the collection, is apparently more often referred to than read by writers on the drama of the period. Contrary to the general belief, it presents several characters worth attention besides Sir Courtly himself. Sir Courtly is obviously a weakened imitation of Etherege's Sir Fopling Flutter; Hothead, a choleric zealot, and Testimony, a canting Puritan, are originals.

¹ "Restoration Comedies: The Parson's Wedding, The London Cuckolds, Sir Courtly Nice, or It Can Not Be." With Introduction and Notes. Montague Summers. Boston: Small, Maynard and Co. Limited Edition. \$4.00.

In none of these comedies is the plot more than ingenious; but like the superior and better-known comedies of Wycherley and Congreve, they contain lively, usually satiric, pictures of the foibles of the time, and the repartee, though sometimes as cheap as that in our least admirable vaudeville, has frequently the sparkle and polish of the best to be found this side of Congreve. The gift of brilliant repartee, indeed, seems to have been as regular a part of the equipment of even a second-rate dramatist of the Restoration as a lyric gift was in the age preceding.

Mr. Summers's introduction, rightly more historical than critical, presents the known facts about the plays and their authors, their sources, and production. His accuracy may be indicated by his correction of the widely disseminated statement that "The Parson's Wedding" is based upon Calderón's "Dama Duende," a notion mistakenly attributed to Dibdin by Ward, and silently copied by everybody who has since referred to the comedy, including Schelling and Nettleton.

RAYMOND A. PRESTON.

A HUMAN HUMANIST.

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-BOUCH is the bad boy of English scholarly criticism. He comes to school with his hair unbrushed and his necktie awry, and fights both on the way to school and on the way home. In school he throws spit-balls at teacher and at the really earnest little boys, and puts caterpillars in the desks of the little girls near him. He is seized with uncontrollable waggery when the rest of the pupils are serious, and thinks a day ill-spent when he has not tipped over an ink-well or rolled a pocketful of marbles across the room. If he is not kept after school day after day, one suspects it is because of some extraordinary clemency on the part of his teachers, or of the principal himself. One wonders, indeed, how any well-conducted school can continue to keep him at all, and why he has not been expelled long ago as beyond correction or repentance. For seven years he has occupied the chair of "King Edward VII Professor of English Literature" in the University of Cambridge, and one would have supposed that his temperamental waywardness, his incapacity for academic gravity and restraint, his drollery and irreverence and gusto, would by this time have been toned down, brought within bounds, blunted of its edge, and replaced at last by decorum and "good taste."

As far as one can see from these reprinted lectures in his new volume of "Studies in Literature,"¹ nothing of this sort has taken place. He still writes—or rather talks—with a scandalously unprofessorial vibrancy; he still insists on talking about "the classics"—Chaucer and Shakespeare; Milton, Byron, and Shelley—as if they were live dogs and not merely dead lions, and as if they might have something relevant to say to the spirit of our own times. This contemporaneity he manages to lend them partly through his habit of visualizing the man behind the work. How many erudite Chaucerians, kept awake nights by A Fragments and B Fragments and the bothersome matter of the final "e," could descend to this?

Through Aldgate Street, London, on any day between 1374 and 1385 there passed, to and from his work, a stoutish man soberly clad, with a forked beard, a whimsical, elvish face, and eyes which, while bent on the cobbles, somehow noted everybody and everything that passed. . . . His daily work takes him down to the river-side and wharves, for he is a Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of wools, skins, and tanned hides in the port of London: where, all day long, for the usual fees, he has to examine bills of lading and draw

¹ "Studies in Literature, Second Series." Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.50.

up the rolls of receipts with his own hand, always at a desk or moving among the merchandise.

These are the closing words of a lecture on Milton:

That is how I see Milton, and that is the portrait I would leave with you—of an old man, lonely and musical, seated at his chamber organ, sliding upon the keyboard a pair of hands pale as its ivory in the twilight of a shabby lodging of which the shabbiness and the gloom molest not him; for he is blind—and yet he sees.

So long as criticism retains this sturdy sense of personality it is fairly secure from pedantry. But it is not the most heterodox of Sir Arthur's ways with literature: he departs even more definitely from the narrow path of scholarship when, in the lectures on Byron and Shelley, he refuses to dilate upon the pleasantly literary aspects of their work, and enters boldly upon a parallel between their post-war environment and our own, sticking at none of the ticklish implications. I wish that these four lectures could be shouted vociferously throughout the classrooms of every innocuous course in the country on "The Romantic Movement in English Poetry." Is this the Byron of the "Hebrew Melodies" and the Shelley of the "Indian Serenade"? I confess that Quiller-Couch has rehabilitated Byron for me as an honest rebel against a society full of small vices and shams, and Shelley as a far from "ineffectual" prophet to a generation left in much the same spiritual slough as ours is. Listen to what he says of Byron after 1816, the Byron of "Manfred," "Cain," "Heaven and Earth," "The Vision of Judgment":

He hates Castlereagh, and all jackals; Brougham, and all sham opponents of tyranny. He disdains its stupidity in George III, its fungoid growth in George IV, the heartless and brilliant expertise of Wellington in saving the world for the benefit of a class. He sees War for what it is, or at any rate for what he believes it to be—a piratical hazard of the powerful, cruelly employing the unreasoning but agonizing mass of mankind as dupes and victims.

The England of the post-Napoleonic period was an uncomfortable place for dissidents, and Sir Arthur points out shrewdly how all the great rebel "Romantics"—Shelley, Keats, Byron, Landor—died away from home, leaving behind them the decaying Coleridge, the renegade Southey, and Wordsworth, who, "after a few glorious years, settled to live comfortably beside the cataracts of the Lake Country that had haunted him like a passion—and ended with Ecclesiastical Sonnets and Sonnets in Defence of Capital Punishment." The bad boy, again, shooting paper darts at the ceiling and sticking out his tongue at the teacher! "The only void," he says, "in which Shelley ever beat his luminous wings in vain was a void in Mr. Arnold's understanding."

I know there are readers who are irritated by these sallies of Sir Arthur's, and find them merely smart and unbecoming a serious scholar: but they must be readers who demand of scholarship a reverential humourlessness which it does not need to entail. It would be an obtuse reader indeed who would be cozened by the gaiety of Sir Arthur's manner—or by his deliberate discursiveness—into missing the frequent acuity of his critical remarks, an acuity at least as real as that of many more laborious savants. The Puritan attitude towards the stage, for example, and the closing of the theatres in 1642, may certainly, as he suggests, have turned Milton from the writing of a tragedy to the writing of an epic, and thus have frustrated "his dream of re-creating our national drama." The moral isolation of Milton in his epoch, his forced and perfect loneliness, may certainly be partly to blame for the distant and inhuman quality of his utterance. The necessary relation of the artist to his "people,"

if he is to be spared futility, is a relation to which Sir Arthur has constantly reverted: "we can not separate art, and especially the literary art, from life—from daily life—even from this passing hour, and get the best out of either." It is Sir Arthur's distinction to have kept life and literature inseparate, and he has managed admirably to get the best out of both.

NEWTON ARVIN.

TOLSTOY'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS.

It was by no means an easy problem that confronted Tolstoy when, in middle life, he became convinced that private property is sinful. His wife had married him in the confident expectation of a certain way of life, and for many years he had lived in this way contentedly. She had had thirteen children, of whom nine survived, and they also had grown up with habits of luxury. His wife and most of his children were unable to adopt his new views, and saw no reason to begin living like peasants. As Countess Tolstoy says in her autobiography: "If I had given away all my fortune at my husband's desire (I don't know to whom), if I had been left in poverty with nine children, I should have had to work for the family—to feed, do the sewing for, wash, bring up my children without education. Leo Nikolaievitch, by vocation and inclination, could have done nothing else but write." As he also disapproved of copyright, he could not have made a living by writing. No doubt he would have tried to cultivate the fields, like a peasant, but his impulse to write and teach would have prevented him from being successful in this attempt. What he did, as every one knows, was to hand over his property to his wife, and to continue to live in the house with her, in spite of his belief that it was wicked to extract money out of the peasants and to place legal restrictions on the reproduction of his books by all and sundry.

Tchertkov's book relates, from the point of view of a disciple and coadjutor, the inward and outward struggle that resulted from this situation. It is impossible to sympathize fully with either party. Tolstoy's wife, in the later years, was no doubt hysterical, tyrannical, avaricious, and addicted to spying. But a good deal of this is accounted for by the thirteen children, and the rest by the desire to save them from Tolstoy's disastrous wrong-headedness, as it appeared to her. It is easy to realize what he must have suffered when she prosecuted peasants whom he liked for trespassing in the woods at Yasnaya Polyana, and when she exacted the uttermost farthing from almost destitute tenants. He suffered not only from the fact that such conduct was against what he thought right, but also from the disbelief in him which it caused among the peasants, and from the sneers to which it gave rise among those who opposed his doctrines. In his diary (as quoted by Tchertkov) he says:

If I heard of myself as an outsider—of a man living in luxury, wringing all he can out of the peasants, locking them up in prison, while preaching and professing Christianity and giving away coppers, and for all his loathsome actions sheltering himself behind his dear wife, I should not hesitate to call him a blackguard.

So far, so good, but in the next sentence he adds: "And that is just what I need that I may be set free from the praises of men and live for my soul."

"Just what I need"—but how did that help the peasants? The whole tone of all the documents in this book compels one to conclude that Tolstoy the saint was just as profound an egoist as Tolstoy the sinner; and it was just this egoism which prevented him from finding a reasonable way out of his troubles. "He considered,"

¹ "The Last Days of Tolstoy," Vladimir Tchertkov. Translated by Nathalie A. Duddington. London: Heinemann.

says Tchertkov, "that the ordeal to which he was continually exposed in his wife's company was profitable for his own soul, and found in it a spiritual satisfaction."

Tolstoy and his wife continued to profess to love one another. He saw through her pretences with his usual merciless insight: "I am not speaking now of love for me, of which there is no trace. She does not want my love for her either; all she wants is that people should think that I love her, and that is so awful." But neither he nor Tchertkov perceived that his attitude to her was quite as trying. "His wife's attitude to him," says Tchertkov, "assisted in him the development of true love for those who hated his soul." But this "true love" showed itself in a hope that some day she would change completely and submit herself wholly to his will—or to "the truth," as he would have put it. A good test of the quality of love is whether one would like to be the object of it, and certainly most people would be infuriated by the kind of love that Tolstoy gave to his wife. "It has become so clear to me," he says, "that when one stands at the parting of the ways and does not know how to act, one ought always to give the preference to the decision which involves more self-sacrifice." Unfortunately his self-sacrifices generally also involved sacrificing the happiness of almost everybody else who was concerned in his decisions.

Tchertkov does succeed, however, in showing conclusively how necessary it had become for Tolstoy to leave his home when he did—only a few days before his death, as it turned out. One can not help feeling that he ought to have taken this step very much sooner. What finally decided him to go was the discovery that his wife searched through his papers when she thought he was asleep, very soon after which she "walks in, asking after my health and wondering at the light which she has seen in my room. Repulsion and indignation grow. I am breathless; I count my pulse seventy-seven. I can not lie still, and suddenly take a final resolution to go away." The touch about "pulse seventy-seven" is characteristic.

Tolstoy was by nature a Titan, but in his later years he tried to cultivate Christian meekness. It can not be said that the attempt was a great success. A proud man does not like to think of his possibilities as limited by his disposition, and is loath to admit that there are forms of virtue which are not for him. Tolstoy, a born aristocrat and despot, with a violent temper and little self-control, was not very well adapted for the rôle of patient self-effacement; perhaps the very difficulty increased his desire to make the attempt. The conclusion which is suggested by his later life is that moral precepts ought to take some account of individuality, and not attempt to mould all men alike. Those who attempt a life violently opposed to their impulses are not likely to be happy themselves or to make others happy. But perhaps Tolstoy's nature contained contradictions, which would have made some form of tragedy inevitable whatever creed he had adopted.

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

SHORTER NOTICES.

MR. BROWN's account¹ of the gypsies with whom he came into intimate contact during a holiday abroad, is avowedly a personal record rather than a sober exhibit of these eternal nomads. He set out for their haunts sure of being pleased, and he was not disappointed. This suggests the attitude which the reader might properly take towards his book, and the probable outcome. Mr. Brown commands a pleasant style, somewhat poetic without lapsing into the wordy consciousness of diaries never meant to be kept private; now and again the scenes and people recall to his mind the melodies of universal poetry, but there is a certain staleness in the quotations. He started out with the advantage of knowing the gypsy tongue,

so that he found it fairly easy to be accepted as "one of the people." Because of this important knowledge he was able to penetrate the heart of their life and discover there the human element, as well as those more sensational qualities which the popular mind associates with the gypsy type. His wandering men and women are something more than sinister-eyed horse-thieves and conscienceless kidnappers. To be sure, he meets with disillusioning adventures among the people of his fancy, and he is honest enough to set them down with the more picturesque parts of his tale. Mr. Woodberry, in his short preface, notes the author's sensitive sympathy; a sympathy which has led him to the promise of another book upon the American gypsy. One's best comment on the present narrative is that one gladly looks forward to its successor.

I. G.

MR. ASHLEY DUKES is admirably fitted for the task of introducing Georg Kaiser¹ to English readers and playgoers. His own book upon the modern European dramatists, written almost a decade ago, revealed an uncompromisingly artistic temperament that insists upon the playwright's best; his conception of the *Uebergangsmensch* looks upon a heroic figure ever in the flux of things; he was, one may believe, the inspirer of Storm Jameson's later book upon the contemporary drama, with its insistence that great drama can not be made out of little souls, and that mere repetition of reality is unworthy of the artist, who must re-create and interpret a life better and nobler than the one we know. He saw the virtues of the German leaders then; he sees the different promise of the new experimenters to-day. But Kaiser is not, as Mr. Dukes hints in his introduction, "the founder of a new dramatic school"; he is one of many who differ so much, not only among themselves but from one work to another, that the general name "Expressionism" needs pages of exegesis. In "From Morn to Midnight," Kaiser is not as expressionistic as in some others of his plays; on the other hand, he has written pieces quite conventional in form, if distinctly indicative of their authorship. It is largely on the score of this play that some of our native reviewers have spoken of Eugene O'Neill's "expressionism," which, if it exist, has thus far been of an external nature. In the "Emperor Jones" or "The Hairy Ape," O'Neill is never as hazy, as groping, as so many of the expressionists manage to be. One is never in doubt, as so often with Kaiser, of O'Neill's meaning; and certainly O'Neill's æsthetic, conscious or not, is far from the metaphysical abstruseness of many of his German fellows. Kaiser is now ironic, now satiric, now hyper-æsthetic (as in his anti-æsthetic "Europa"), now clearly ethical, as in "Hölle Weg Erde," "Die Koralle," "Gas." He is intellectually an agile performer, and by no means always the "half-bluffer" that Kerr of the *Berliner Tageblatt* once called him. He is distinctly less autobiographical than the majority of his experimenting countrymen; a quality he shares with Carl Sternheim. The present play is a good introduction to the strivings of the expressionist contingent. It does suggest the possibilities of a new method, possibilities that have been worked out better, one believes, in "Hölle Weg Erde," for example. Kaiser has a gift for the plastic employment of crowds, in the antiphonal manner of the expressionists; he has feeling for colour and rhythm ("Europa"); for movement (certain scenes in "Der Gerettete Alkibiades"). He has not yet become impossible, like the mystifier Oskar Kokoschka, or the later Hasenclever. "From Morn to Midnight" displays one of the important phases of the new German stage—the soul-striving that some of their critics have called a new "passion," using that word in its religious sense. When it was produced in England, a facetious reviewer called it a "bolshevik" drama. The comment betrays the critic's quality rather than the dramatist's. Kaiser, like Ernst Toller, is no flatterer of the proletariat. He would ensure bread to mankind, but he knows that man does not live by bread alone.

I. G.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

I WAS looking for something else, but I happened on Isaac D'Israeli's "The Calamities of Authors." Could anyone pass indifferently a book with such a title? We

¹ "Nights and Days on the Gypsy Trail." Irving Brown. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$3.00.

¹ "From Morn to Midnight." George Kaiser. Translated by Ashley Dukes. (The Theatre Guild Version.) New York: Brentano's. \$1.50.

are all authors nowadays, and the lamentations of the literary tribe are for ever in our ears: what could be more amusing, therefore, than to examine our common predicament in the light of history? I turned to the table of contents: "The Maladies of Authors," "The Despair of Young Poets," "The Pains of Fastidious Egotism," "Laborious Authors," "Genius, the Dupe of its Passions," "Miseries of Successful Authors," "The Illusions of Writers in Verse," etc. Then I turned to the preface. "It will be found," the writer observes, "that the most successful Author can obtain no equivalent for the labours of his life. I have endeavoured to ascertain this fact, to develop the causes, and to paint the variety of evils that naturally result from the disappointments of genius. Authors themselves," he continues, "never discover this melancholy fact till they have yielded to an impulse, and adopted a profession, too late in life to resist the one, or abandon the other." Evidently, I said to myself, our essayist regards the whole case as pretty hopeless; but so much the better. Let him paint it as black as he can; he will be the more likely to confine himself to evidence, and the less inclined to indulge in exhortation.

THERE was little of the calamitous, assuredly, in Isaac D'Israeli's own career: history records few literary lives that have been more placid and prosperous. What attracted him to this sombre topic? A gentle nature, we seem to divine, together with the faculty of a born anecdotist who surveyed the world from the summit of the most tragic, as well as the most brilliant, of the literary centuries. The splendours and miseries of authorship! It is to the eighteenth century one turns for the supreme examples of both. The prodigies of unrequited learning, the iniquities of a brutal satire, the squalor and the ferocity that one associates with the name of Grub Street: of all this the rumour, and more than the rumour, had reached D'Israeli's ears, for he tells us that he had known many of the victims of whom he writes. If the moral of his book may be stated in the phrase that "to devote our life to authorship is not the true means of improving our happiness or our fortune," his purpose was rather to combat the "tardy and phlegmatic feeling" of the public where authors were concerned. "I turn," he says, "from the leaden-hearted disciples of Adam Smith, and from all their vile vocabulary of 'unproductive stock,' to appeal to the livelier genius of any auctioneer's puffer, any chapman of second-hand wares, any huckster of old iron and broken china, whether he does not feel himself a being more important than an 'Author by Profession,' and far less miserable?" It may be added that, while he takes the authors themselves to task for their vanity and their bad temper, he insists that they are entitled to their "susceptibility of praise" and that they justly feel neglect "as ordinary men might the sensation of being let down into a sepulchre, and being buried alive." Any opinion to the contrary, he says, "may be Stoicism, but it is not Humanity."

SUCH is the spirit in which he takes us behind the scenes of Grub Street; he shows us from within, among others, certain of the lives that Pope lampooned in the "Dunciad." Of the rapacity of booksellers and the insolence of patrons he gives many a curious anecdote: there is the case, for instance, of the mendicant author, Myles Davies, who, driven to the wild resolution of hawking his own works, received from a certain duke and his lady the attention that he describes in the following words:

His and her grace came after dinner to stare at me, with open windows and shut mouths, but filled with fair water, which they spouted with so much dexterity that they twisted the water through their teeth and mouth-skrew, to flash near

my face, and yet just to miss me . . . [A second time] out fly whole showers of lymphatic rockets, which had like to have put out my mortal eyes.

Or take the case of the learned Sale, the translator of the Koran, who "too often wanted a change of linen, and often wandered in the streets in search of some compassionate friend who would supply him with the meal of the day." Or the "English Montesquieu," De Lolme, who spent half his life in a debtors' prison. Or the great Smollett, whose life passed amid "incredible labour and chagrin"; or Dryden and Hume, Stoics both, yet so vexed and slighted that they regretted they had been born among Englishmen. If such is the fate of the greatest authors, not less miserable, our essayist observes, is that of the most popular: Henry Carey, the delight of the Muses, the creator of "God Save the King," died broken-hearted, a suicide, with a halfpenny in his pocket.

IN the Ryecroft papers George Gissing, meditating on his old life in London, asked whether there still existed the wretched race of authors he had formerly known. It was a gratuitous question: one doubts if there is a single type described in D'Israeli's book that is not to be duplicated in the New York of 1923. The external conditions of the literary life have changed beyond all recognition; otherwise, even to the mendicant author, history repeats itself eternally. There is no difference in the kinds, there is only a difference in the degree: as compared with those of our own scene, the miseries of the eighteenth century are as profound, as intense, as its splendours. There is something enormous about the literary wrecks who figure in D'Israeli's pages. One easily thinks of them as the contemporaries of Fielding and Richardson. Take, for example, Joshua Barnes who, "besides the works he published, left behind him nearly fifty unfinished ones; many were epic poems, all intended to be in twelve books, and some had reached their eighth." Or Robert Heron, who "lived by literary industry in the confinement of a sponging-house," wrote a history of Scotland in six volumes, a system of chemistry, innumerable works in Latin and French, translations, biographies, and "a great multiplicity of articles in almost every branch of Science and Literature." Or "Voluminous Prynne" (of the previous age) whose particular calamity was that he was "without judgment" and who considered that being debarred from pen, ink and books was "an act more barbarous than the loss of his ears." Literary leviathans of this order are of an extinct race; and extinct as well are the fierce intellectual passions of an earlier age that still survived in the eighteenth century.

THESE and their calamitous results fill a good half of D'Israeli's pages. That authors have literally "died of criticism" we can well believe as we review some of the controversies of the age of Pope. The *odium theologicum* had passed into literature: there were critics in those days whose professed aim was to vex their enemies to madness. Every one remembers Goldsmith's encounter with Kendrick, "one of the great disturbers of literary repose," as D'Israeli calls him; more formidable still was Dr. Gilbert Stuart, whose critical labours "were directed to annihilate all the genius of his country." Truly, the literary scene of the eighteenth century was a battle-field, and a cold and bitter wind blew over it. D'Israeli, who had not been touched by it himself, had seen too much of the carnage; and he wrote his book, in the spirit of the time, as a warning to youth. "Most authors," he remarks, "close their lives in apathy or despair, and too many live by means which few of them would not blush to disclose." But he adds resignedly: "The first misfortune a Poet meets with will rarely deter him from incurring more."

*Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief;
Doctor, lawyer, Indian chief.*

AN earnest admirer of the FREEMAN on the Pacific coast wrote us that in spite of his admiration for this paper he must protest against our unfair treatment of France whenever her rôle in international affairs is mentioned. Indirectly we learned, at about the same time, that a respected Philadelphian reader likes everything about the FREEMAN except its attitude towards Mr. Woodrow Wilson. During the same week we were favoured with some observations on the FREEMAN and on the particular place in the sun which it has established, from a prominent man of letters. He wrote so interestingly that we would gladly quote the missive were we not constrained to respect his "Not for publication." This man intimated that the FREEMAN is too conservative in discussing public men; he wants us to attack people more vigorously!

So there you are. Everybody likes us and everybody would alter some one particular feature. As these letters come into the office, and as oral comments are repeated to us, we make a mental resolve to rush to the editors and ask them to heed the warnings. Then we pause: if we are going to soft-soap France, and approve the war- and peace-records of Mr. Wilson, and bludgeon a few officeholders, and do some more of the many things that are proposed for the improvement of the FREEMAN, will not all of the critics be even less pleased with the paper than they are to-day?

The keen supervision of this paper by its readers and the constant expression of their opinion are valuable and we hope that none will desist from saying his say when the spirit moves him. The specific suggestions may not be adopted, but every statement of views produces some effect.

Meantime, we interpret the activity of our critical readers as the greatest encouragement that can be offered, and we hope to hear more from those in every one of the categories named above, even from Indian chiefs—Asiatic or American.

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